High School Catechism

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High School Catechism

OR

The Baltimore Catechism Explained

In Accordance with Holy Scripture, the Decisions of Holy Church, the Teachings of the Fathers and of the Doctors of the Church, particularly St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Alphonsus de Ligorio

✠

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FOREWORD TO TEACHERS

Teachers who use this High School Catechism as a text-book, should bear in mind that the time devoted to the practical understanding of what is taught therein, should not be less than three years. During the first year the pupils should learn by heart the answers to the questions of the Baltimore Catechism. They should also be taught to grasp fully the meaning of the words and the simple explanation of the answer as found in the large type of this edition. Teachers may likewise add their own explanation in order to assist their pupils in the full understanding of each question and answer. After the first year's course, teachers should be thoroughly acquainted with the capacity of their pupils, and should select from the instructions contained in the smaller type those explanations that suit their pupils' intelligence now more fully developed. They may also select from the appendixes those that are intimately connected with the instructions they are giving.

In the beginning of the third year or sooner, pupils should first study the appendix on Holy Scripture in connection with Bible History and also the appendix on the Ecumenical Councils in connection with Church History. Finally the most difficult questions that have been left over in the first two years, may now be taken up with fruit. Teachers should also invite their pupils to present in writing any doubt they entertain or objection they have encountered in reference to any doctrine of the Church; or they may name one of their students,

each one in his or her turn to defend any dogma of the Church against one or two of their companions who have previously formulated in writing the objection they would propose against any particular dogma. The defenders of the affirmative side and the objectors who take the negative side of the question, should be told to have recourse to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* or to any other approved Catholic author where the question is treated at length. When pupils have sufficiently practiced these religious debates in the schoolroom, it may be well to allow public debates before the whole school, not excepting the teachers.

Proper subjects for debates are: The existence of a God infinitely perfect; the creation of all things from nothing as related by Moses is neither contrary to reason nor to science; the deluge as narrated in Genesis cannot be disproved scientifically; there are necessarily mysteries relating to God's nature, that is, truths incomprehensible to created intelligence; Revelation from God to man is possible and the Christian Revelation is divine; the mystery of the Blessed Trinity is above reason but not against reason; the Church is of divine institution, and Christ her Founder has promised her infallibility in matters of faith and morals and indestructibility; "Out of the Church there is no salvation"; The Pope of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, is infallible when he proclaims to the whole world a doctrine of faith and morals; and, the erroneous condemnation of Galileo, the Occidental Schism, and the supposed scandalous lives of one or two popes in no wise effect the Pope's prerogative of infallibility, etc.

Abbreviations used in this work

A. D. ..... The Year of Our Lord.

A fortiori ...With a stronger reason.

B. C. ..... Before Christ.

b. ..... born.

Cf. ..... Confer, compare, see.

d. ..... died.

e. g. ..... *exempli gratia,* for example.

etc. ..... *et caetera,* and the rest, and so forth.

ib. or ibid. . *ibidem,* in the same place or place cited above

vide ..... see.

l. c. ..... *loco citato,* i. e. place cited above.

sq., et sq. ..and following, verses, numbers, etc.

viz. .....to wit, namely.

INTRODUCTION

Christian Doctrine. The Catechism

What knowledge is the most salutary of all?

The most salutary knowledge is that which enables man to attain the end for which he has been placed upon earth, to wit,, eternal happiness in heaven.

How is this knowledge gained?

By learning the Christian doctrine.

What is Christian doctrine?

Christian doctrine is the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ while on earth and preached by His Apostles throughout the world.

Since the Christian doctrine comes not from man but from God and since it shows us the way to eternal happiness, it follows that it is not only the holiest and most salutary knowledge we can possess, but also the most certain of all knowledge, for God, Who is infinitely holy, good and wise, cannot but teach us what tends to our holiness and welfare; neither can He deceive us nor be deceived. We must therefore accept all the truths revealed by Him, even if we should not be able to understand them all; or if there be some truths revealed by God which surpass all our understanding, and which we call mysteries, we should not doubt them; for by so doing we would doubt God's veracity. Is it not presumptuous on our part that we finite beings, subject to error and limited in intelligence, should pretend to comprehend the incomprehensible Source of all truth, yea Truth Itself?

History tells us when and in what manner Jesus Christ taught us the Christian doctrine; and that Christ is God and His doctrine divine, will necessarily follow from the simple facts related by undeniable history.

Christ, the Son of God, came on earth over 1900 years ago. Palestine, or the Holy Land, was chosen as the scene of His birth, His life and His death, because the Jewish race, or Hebrews, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, inhabited that land. Among this Chosen People, God, by a predilection had preserved the faith of the One God, and also

had kept alive faith in the Redeemer promised to Adam and Eve immediately after their fall.

This promise of a Redeemer to come was often renewed by God to the Patriarchs, or heads of families, descendants of Adam. Prophets raised up by God foretold the time of His coming, His miraculous birth of a Virgin, the place of His birth, His holy life and the wonders He would work among the people. They clearly foretold His sufferings, His passion and death, and that He would choose for Himself a new people, among whom He would establish a sacrifice more agreeable to God than those that had been established through Moses. (See appendix on revelation.)

A Saviour, then, was expected not only among the Jews but even among the Pagans.

When the time decreed by the Almighty for the coming of the Redeemer had arrived, an angel was sent to Nazareth to announce the tidings to an espoused maid, Mary by name, the daughter of the holy couple Joachim and Ann. After saluting her respectfully, the Angel Gabriel declared to her that she had been chosen to become the Mother of the Redeemer and that her Son would be called Jesus.

Nine months afterwards the Maid of Nazareth, wedded to Joseph, brought forth, in a lonely stable, the Redeemer promised by the angel. His birth was announced to shepherds amidst celestial hymns and enrapturing music, and they, hastening to Bethlehem, found the Child wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, as the angel had revealed to them. A star in the East of more than natural brightness brought Chaldean Magi, princes and learned men, to the crib of the Infant to offer to the newborn Son of the Maid the homage due to their King and their God. King Herod, learning from the Magi or Wise Men of the birth of the new King at Bethlehem, determined to destroy the Child and cruelly ordered the massacre of all children under one year of age in and around Bethlehem. Innocent blood flowed in torrents, but an angel had commanded Joseph to flee into Egypt with the Child Jesus and His Mother. The Child Jesus sought by Herod was safe.

Upon the death of Herod, Joseph was directed again by an angel to return to Palestine, where he fixed His abode in Nazareth of Galilee. There for thirty years the Holy Family lived, and Jesus grew in wisdom as well as in age. When about thirty years old He began His public career: He chose twelve Apostles as witnesses of His teaching and His miracles, and preached His heavenly doctrine to the multitude. No man ever spoke as He did, His hearers said, and with reason, for the sublimity of His teaching was proof of its divine origin. He also proved that His Gospel was divine by numberless miracles and many

prophecies. With truth could He answer to the disciples of St. John the Baptist, who was preaching the baptism of penance to the people on the Jordan—, as a preparation for the Gospel of Christ: "Go and tell John what you have seen; the blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the lame walk and the Gospel is preached to the poor."

At Christ's baptism by John the heavens opened. The Spirit of God descending as a dove was seen hovering over His head, and a voice spoke: "This is my Son in Whom I am well pleased. Behold the mystery of the Blessed Trinity taught in a sublime scene!

Three years and a half Jesus traveled from city to city, from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, everywhere preaching by example and burning words the practice of the sublimest virtues, healing incurable diseases and even bringing the dead to life. He was kind and merciful to all, except to the hypocritical Pharisees and their dupes, who stubbornly refused to accept His doctrine. To convince these, He appealed to His deeds and to His miracles. They demanded still greater miracles but, knowing their false and perfidious hearts, He offered for a last proof His own resurrection, on the third day after His death.

Pushed on by the demon of envy and hatred, the Pharisees and their followers seek a means to procure His death. He is brought in bonds before the High Priest, and is condemned to death. And why? Because He proclaimed Himself the Son of God. The sentence is sustained before Pilate, the governor, and He is condemned to the death of the cross. His long, sorrowful passion follows; "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb without voice before his shearer, he opened not his mouth." He hangs for three long hours on the cross prepared for His execution. He preaches even from His bed of torture, and expires only when all the prophecies concerning Him have been accomplished. He willed to die; He was eager to die for the salvation of all men. At His death all nature mourns, the sun gives no light and the earth is plunged into the deepest darkness, the earth trembles, the graves open, giving up their dead, and the veil of the tabernacle is rent asunder, for the Old Law had come to an end and the Law of Grace begins.

The dead Saviour is quietly buried by loving hands, but His tomb is guarded by the paid soldiers of His persecutors. On the third day after His death an angel rolls away the heavy stone that closed the monument; the tomb is seen empty and reveals the great miracle of the Resurrection. Jesus, the risen Saviour, appears to many: first to Mary Magdalen and to the eleven Apostles who have remained faithful to Him, and subsequently to about five hundred people. His Apostles are told

to go into Galilee where they would meet Him. He remains on earth forty days to prove that He was truly risen; He establishes the Church and places Peter at its head and, having fully instructed His Apostles in all things necessary for the arduous mission entrusted to them, He sends them as His ambassadors with the words: "Going therefore teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."

Having done all this, He ascends into heaven in the presence of His Apostles and Disciples, imparting to them His last blessing.

In obedience to the command of their Master, the Apostles, after having received the Holy Ghost, go forth to preach throughout the world the good tidings of salvation by the death of the Saviour, and the mustard seed of the Church, under the protection of God, fructifies in spite of all opposition from within and without. The pagan world abandons its idols, its evil customs, vices, and sacrifices. Christian churches take the place of the heathen temples and everywhere is set up among civilized peoples the emblem of the cross, through which alone salvation is to be hoped for.

Does not this series of events, do not those various chains of evidences, all concurring to one end, prove by light clearer than day, that Christ Jesus is the Messiah promised by the Prophets, that He is the true Son of God, that His doctrine is divine, and that the Church He has established is commissioned to preach the Gospel of salvation in the name of Christ to all people even to the end of the world? (See Appendix I.)

How does Christian doctrine help us to attain the end for which we have been placed on earth?

Because the Christian doctrine teaches us all we must know and do while on earth to be eternally happy hereafter.

What is the catechism?

The catechism is the Christian doctrine taught by question and answer.

The word "catechism" comes from the Greek word "catechesis," which means oral instruction in general; but from the early days of Christianity the word has been used to designate an instruction in the Christian doctrine by question and answer; and hence it means

also the book containing such instructions. Likewise the word "catechumen" from the Greek "catechoumenos", which means originally a pupil in general, was employed by the early Fathers to designate those who were being instructed in the Christian doctrine as a preparation for their baptism.

Theology and Christian doctrine have the same foundation, namely, divine Revelation; but the former expounds every dogma and truth of Revelation; it weighs the credibility of its witnesses, which are Holy Scripture, Tradition and the decisions of Holy Church; it weighs and compares the testimony of these three witnesses of divine Revelation, which are as the three sources of a common fountainhead, from which theology draws its conclusions, and so proves scientifically every truth it advances. On the other hand, Christian doctrine teaches only such dogmatic truths as we must believe and such moral precepts as we must observe to save our souls; it solely attempts such explanations as are proportionate to the comprehension of the masses, and gives no other proof than the magisterial teaching of an infallible Church.

N.B.—A short treatise on divine Revelation as the fountainhead of all supernatural truth and on the three sources or witnesses of divine Revelation, viz., Holy Scripture, Tradition and the decisions of Mother Church, will be found in appendixes at the end of this Catechism.

From what has been said, it is evident that the catechism should be divided mainly into two parts: the first part to treat on what we have to believe; and the second part, on what we have to do, to save our souls.

The first part, then, treats on the Articles of Faith with the Apostles' Creed as a guide; and the second part, namely the part, which treats on what we have to do to be saved, is subdivided again into two parts: one teaches us the nature and effects of the sacraments, without which, in our fallen nature, we could not keep the true Faith and all the Commandments of God during our whole lives, and the other comprises lessons on prayer, various devotions and good works that keep alive within us the effects of the sacraments; and the last part treats of the Commandments of God and of His Church.

LESSON THE FIRST

THE END OF MAN

1. Who made the world?

God made the world.

In this question the word "world" means the universe, the cosmos, but in a more restricted sense, it means the earth we inhabit with all what concerns or interests us.

Did not this world always exist?

There was a time when this universe did not exist, for the constant movement and change around us prove to us that the world did not exist from all eternity. It exists now; but it might not have existed, and therefore, it has a contingent[1] existence and not a necessary one. The world is composed of beings that continually change, and by changing they become what they were not. The whole world, being composed of contingent beings, must needs have a contingent existence. The same movement and change in the world show that it is dependent upon another being for those changes, and therefore, all contingent beings owe their existence to a necessary[2] being. The whole world, accordingly, as composed of dependent[3] beings, depending for their changes upon another being or beings, itself ultimately depends for its existence on another, an absolute[4] being, i. e., a being that depends on no other for its existence, and therefore is self-existent. Shall we call on chance for the explanation of the changes in the world? Chance has not made and never will make anything in this world, for it cannot give what it has not.

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[1] A contingent being is one that exists, but whose existence is not necessary.

[2] A necessary being is one that necessarily exists. Necessary is the opposite to contingent.

[3] A dependent being is one that depends for its existence on another being or beings.

[4] An absolute being depends on no being for its existence. Absolute is the opposite to dependent.

EXISTENCE OF GOD

We have a notion or concept of God, a Being on Whom we are dependent; we fear Him and attribute to Him knowledge, wisdom, justice and other qualities in a supreme degree. This concept of God is universal among civilized and barbarous peoples. Is this concept real? Does God really exist?

The catechism teaches us that God made the world and all it contains. Some maintain that the existence of God is not a matter of faith, because it is a matter of conviction; for, when we are convinced of a truth, we do not believe it on the authority of God, but rely upon our own judgment. Again, how could we accept any revealed truth from God, Whom we do not know as existing already? Since this opinion derives great weight from the teachings of St. Thomas (2. 2., q. 18, a. 4, 5) and is accepted by many, we must conclude that it is at least useful to examine, why we have the certain conviction of the existence of God.

First Proof—The beauty, motion, and order in the material world

The beauty in the universe, from the blade of grass to the magnificent canopy of the heavens, and the order that reigns in all that moves and is moved, attest an intelligent, efficient cause, which is not the universe itself; for matter of itself has neither order, nor motion, nor intelligence to co-ordinate all things to an end.

This argument can be developed and extended to thousands of existing things, and the conclusion will always lead to God; for the efficient cause of all that exists cannot be any other than He, Whom we call God.

Second Proof — The Moral Order

Every individual feels within himself a stern judge, a conscience that approves what is good and reproves what is evil. That conscience or judgment of the soul is formed according to a code of moral law common to all people. Even the savage knows that when he steals or murders, he does wrong: all men have at least a limited knowledge of honesty and justice, of right and the duty to respect it, of moral evil and moral good, of virtue and vice. The Ten Commandments are indelibly imprinted on the hearts of men, although they may not have heard of the two tables of the Law on which God engraved them.

That moral law is the base of all the laws of the nations spread over the whole earth, including the tribal laws of the savages. It matters not that many act contrary to their conscience and that those laws are only imperfectly understood; the moral law exists. Mankind is not the author of that law,

but it is imposed upon us in spite of us, even in spite of the shameful vices of many, who disregard the voice of their conscience and would gladly stifle it. Add to this the necessity of the moral law for the welfare of the individual, of the family and of society at large.

What just, intelligent and wise being has imposed this moral law, but He, Whom we call God, and Who has, as it were, engraved the moral law upon the hearts of all men?

Philosophical Proofs

The philosophical proofs of the existence of God are taken chiefly from the abstract notion of motion, (moving or being moved), of absolute and dependent, of necessary and contingent.

All things that move, if by nature inert like all matter, are moved by something else, and suppose one who is not moved; all dependent beings necessarily lead to a cause that is absolute or independent; all things contingent or not necessarily existing, lead to a necessary being. The first cause of all things that are moved which is itself not moved, is also necessary and absolute, and that being is God.

The objection raised against these arguments is nonsense; for if it is maintained that from a thing that is moved we go to one that moves; and that this in turn is moved by another; that this last one moves and is moved and so on, in an infinite succession of things moving and being moved; the reasoning is absurd, for then we should have an infinite chain of things being moved, or an effect without a cause. The same is to be said of contingent and dependent beings in a series.

2. Who is God?

God is the Creator of heaven and earth and of all things.

By the question: "Who is God?" the catechism asks us simply to give a popular idea or notion of God, or an idea by which we can easily distinguish Him from any other being; and the answer is that God is the Creator of heaven and earth and of all things. This is not all we know of God, but, since He alone is the Creator, the answer is sufficient to distinguish Him from everything else that is not God. God is called the Creator because He has made all things out of nothing. Man makes

wonderful things with pre-existing material, such as numberless machines, locomotives and the like, but the wisest man in the world cannot make a single piece of stone or earth out of nothing.

3. What is man?

Man is a creature composed of body and soul and made to the image and likeness of God.

As man is a rational creature, three important questions come before his mind: what am I?, whence am I? and why am I?

The solution to the question: "Whence am I?" has already been explained, and the solution to the question: "What am I?" teaches me my nature, or what is essential to my being.

The last question concerns man's destiny, but as we can have an intermediate destiny as well as a final destiny, we ask ourselves: "Why are we here?" "Have we another destiny, and what is our final destiny?"

All these questions, although interesting to a rational being, might be purely speculative without practical usefulness, were it not that our final destiny is not absolutely determined by our Maker, but is conditional upon our fidelity in His service. The fact that our Maker willed that we shall merit our destiny, clearly shows the necessity of knowing whence we come, what we are and why we exist; for the answer to these questions are the fundamental truths, on which is based the knowledge required to obtain our final destiny.

The answer to the question:" What is man?" teaches us three things: 1st, that man is a creature and if a creature, he was made by God Who created all things; 2d, that man is composed of a body and soul; and 3d, that man was made by God to His own likeness.

The catechism teaches us that man is a being having a material body and a spiritual soul. By his body he belongs to the animal kingdom, that is, he has all the properties of an animal; and by his soul, a spirit endowed with understanding and free will, he is like to the angels and to God, his Creator.

Our intimate conviction tells us that it is the same I, who feels, sees, hears, smells, tastes, and receives impressions from

existing material things; it is the same I, who thinks, reasons, forms judgments and determines to act, or not, choosing one thing rather than another. The compound of body and soul forms then but one subsistent being, and since we act rationally, but independently of each other and of other beings, each of us is a person.

The soul is the mistress of the body and rules over it. The sensations that come to us independently of the soul are purely material.

A body without a soul would simply be composed of material parts having length, breadth and thickness; without the soul it would neither have life, like the plants, nor feel, like the animals; for when the soul separates from the body, the latter dies, i. e., it ceases to live and feel, and returns to its source, Mother Earth. The soul is, then, the life and subsistence of the body.

Of the nature or essence of a spirit we cannot have any clear concept; for all our notions and concepts come originally from material things, through our senses, and the impressions made on our soul through the senses form the basis of our reasoning power, its judgments, etc. Hence we can not give an adequate definition of a spirit.

4. Is this likeness in the body or in the soul?

This likeness is chiefly in the soul.

The likeness existing between God and man is chiefly in the soul: for the only likeness between the body and God is, that the body has being and is organized and adapted for the soul's communication with the physical world; for, as has already been stated, the soul is the life of the body.

5. How is the soul like to God?

The soul is like to God, because it is a spirit that will never die, and has understanding and free will.

What properties has the soul in which a likeness can be found between it and God? The answer is that it is a spirit, endowed with understanding and free will and will never die. There are then four properties of the soul, in which we find a likeness to God, its Creator: it is a spirit, it has understanding, it has free will, it is immortal.

By nature the body is mortal, i. e., is subject to death: for although Adam was created by God to pass from earth to heaven without intervening death, that happiness was solely due to God's goodness and was dependent on his obedience. As we shall see later, Adam and Eve lost that happiness for themselves and for their descendants by their sin of eating the forbidden fruit.

The soul is like to God, because it is a spirit. That the soul is a spirit or is not matter like the many things we see around us in the universe, is a dogma of our Faith, taught us by Revelation, and our reason clearly teaches us the same truth.

A spirit is a being that can act without depending intrinsically or necessarily on matter. As we know a substance or thing by its acts, if the acts of the soul teach us that the soul can act independently of the body, they will prove the immateriality of the soul, or its spirituality.

Our first notions or concepts come to us through our senses, but from these concrete notions, such as of this or that wise, good or virtuous man, we form abstract notions or concepts, such as of wisdom, goodness, virtue. We form in like manner abstract notions of the necessary and the contingent, the absolute and the dependent, the possible and the impossible, of cause and effect, good and evil, etc. Our soul has besides the power to study and analyze the very notions we have formed in our minds and to compare one with another, even if they be abstract notions, which operation constitutes an immaterial act upon an immaterial object. We can study the connection between one notion and another; we form judgments upon notions acquired, though often opposed to the perceptions of our senses. We may call our will into action and choose among many notions those which, if we take their effects into consideration, may best suit the end we have in view. All these acts are done independently of our senses, and consequently all these immaterial acts prove that the soul capable of them is a spirit.

The soul is by nature immortal. It is not composed of parts like the body, and therefore cannot disintegrate or decompose, and to die is to disintegrate or fall apart. Neither can it undergo transformation like material bodies, which lose the form of one substance to take another, for it has no substantial form,[1] being itself the substantial form of the body.

[1] The simplicity of the soul admits of no composition like material things, in which a substantial form was added to matter, in itself indeterminate, to make it a stone, a plant, a fish, a dog, etc

The soul being spiritual, the death of the body does not affect it.

Immortality of the Soul

1. The first proof of the immortality of the soul is taken from our respect for the dead, as in funeral rites and in the erection of tombstones, etc., and from the certainty we have of a future punishment or reward; for this constant and universal belief cannot be explained except by revelation from God, or by admitting that this universal conviction is a necessity and therefore infallible.

2. The same truth of the immortality of the soul follows from God's infinite wisdom, for even if we admit only that the soul can survive the death of the body, unless we admit the immortality of the soul, this aptitude of the soul would be useless and given to the soul in vain. Can Infinite Wisdom act in vain?

3. A third argument of the immortality of the soul rests on the justice of God. He loves moral good and detests evil. We see the wicked often prosperous during their lives, while the virtuous are afflicted and suffer. Can it be that the just God would give no sanction to His law by not punishing the wicked and rewarding the just? And if that sanction has no constant place in this world, must it not have its full effect in the next?

The justice of God proves a future life, in which all virtue shall be rewarded and all iniquity shall reap its punishment.

The sanction of the moral law is insufficient unless it be eternal, for the wicked could ultimately defy God and the just could find no happiness in a reward that must come to an end.

4. Our last argument is taken from God's loving kindness. Every man has in his heart an invincible craving for happiness. This universal desire can have its origin only in our nature, and therefore the Creator must have implanted it in our soul. This desire does not receive its fulfillment in this life, which is but a "valley of tears"; therefore it will be satisfied in another life; for otherwise the craving of our soul would be a mere deception. Finally, as happiness is not true happiness unless it be eternal, our soul will necessarily live for ever.

6. Why did God make you?

God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in heaven.

The catechism here teaches two things: the reason of our being on earth and our final destiny after this life; but there is a connection between our life on earth

and our final destiny: one is dependent on the other, for the reward of heaven depends on our knowing God and our serving Him here on earth. The sense clearly is: if in this life we learn to know God, Who made us and placed us here on earth, and if we love and serve Him, by being obedient to His commandments during our whole life, we shall forever be happy with God in heaven.

Now, what is it to be with God forever in heaven?

To be with God is to see God face to face or to see God as He is; to enjoy His infinite perfections which will make our inexpressible delight. The word "heaven" is added for a better understanding of the joys and happiness that await those who love and serve God on earth; and by adding "forever" the catechism teaches us furthermore that this supreme happiness will never end.

What kind of knowledge should we have of God?

To serve God we must first know Him. A merely natural knowledge of God, proclaimed as sufficient by the Rationalists, who deny all supernatural revelation, is not enough for salvation. We must know God by faith, that is know Him as He has made Himself known. He is not only our Creator but our ultimate end; we come from God and are created for a supernatural union with God, i. e., to see Him face to face, to contemplate the divine essence and enjoy His infinite perfections.

Was it not proper and suitable, if God destined man to a supernatural end, that this destiny should be made known to him, so that he might whilst on earth direct his attention and his actions towards that end? In order to acquire the knowledge of our duties towards God, and to direct our thoughts and desires as well as our actions towards our supernatural end, a supernatural revelation becomes necessary.

Even for those truths which we can acquire about God and His infinite perfections by reason alone, a divine revelation is morally necessary, for to attain to that knowledge without any mixture of error would be a laborious work, of which few people are capable

What two practical truths flow from this question?

First, that we are only pilgrims in this world and heaven is our home, and that, finally, our life is but a time of probation.

Secondly, that man, if he wish to act wisely and prudently, must not attach his heart to the fleeting goods of this world,

but always keep in view the service he owes his God while on earth, for this is the only way to secure eternal happiness.

7. Of which must we take more care, our soul or our body?

We must take more care of our soul than of our body.

To be convinced of the truth of this answer, we must first understand the question and bear in mind that the end of our sojourn on earth is eternal happiness in heaven, as clearly set forth in the preceding question.

God made the body for the soul as an instrument necessary for the operations of the soul. The soul is the mistress, and, although it needs the organs of the body to obtain the first notions and concepts that come to it from the physical world around us, and from our intercourse with one another, it can act without the body in the operations of the intellect and of the will, with the aid of memory to retain the perceptions, notions, judgments and the decisions of the will already formed. Notions, comparisons, deductions, judgments and decisions which follow the perceptions obtained by the soul through the organs of the body, are principally the work of the soul alone. The help of the body is again necessary, or at least very useful, for the execution of the designs formed by the will, and is indespensable when physical action is required, as is evident from all our daily occupations. Now, when do we take care of our soul and what care must we take of our body? As the body remains through life a necessary, or at least, very useful instrument to the soul to obtain our first notions and acquire new ones, and to execute actions determined upon by the soul, it follows that a moderate care of the body becomees necessary. We must take care of our health and of our outward appearance; eschew slovenly habits, love cleanliness; use moderation and frugality in eating and drinking, avoid excess in our amusements and recreations; restrain excess of anxicty for future needs; in one word, we must preserve the energies of the body, so that it may remain a fit instrument of the soul striving to attain its final destiny.

We take care of our soul when we enlarge our sphere of knowledge in all useful arts and sciences, especially in the knowledge and science of religion, the most necessary and eminent of all knowledges and salutary attainments; when we subject our will and our inclinations to the moral laws of the Gospel; when we increase in our soul its supernatural life by all those means which Christ has instituted, and when we shun

sin which diminishes or totally destroys sanctifying grace, the supernatural life of the soul; when we direct all our thoughts and desires, words and actions towards the end of our existence on earth, viz.: our intimate union with God in heaven; and finally when we practice the duties of our state of life with a view to pleasing our Maker.

We must not lose sight of the fact that since the fall of our first parents, our bodies are unhappily too often an obstacle to the soul's desires and exertions to assure our salvation hereafter; love of ease and comfort, and other evil inclinations flattering the senses, often clamor to be heard and demand satisfaction. That very infection of original depravity, the consequence of Adam's sin, has like a cancer eaten into the very vitals of the soul, so that the soul not only has to battle against the wicked desires of the flesh, but against its own unlawful attachments, such as worldly glory, honors and preferments, love of independence of God and man that would bring ruin to the soul, if not sternly opposed. From what has been said, it is evident that we must take more care of our soul than of our body, for the soul, being the mistress of her own actions as well as those of the body, is mainly responsible for the attainment of the ultimate end of our pilgrimage on earth. Another conclusion that we arrive at is that, whereas the flesh wars against the spirit, i. e., the soul, an insane love and care of the body emboldens the flesh in its rebellion and strengthens its unlawful inclinations, whilst it weakens the will in its laudable determination. The flesh, therefore, must often be subdued by such means as fasting and other painful mortifications in order that, as St. Paul teaches, by chastising the body, we may bring it under subjection.

8. Why must we take more care of our soul than of our body?

We must take more care of our soul than of our body, because in losing our soul we lose God and eternal happiness.

We have seen already that we are destined for eternal happiness. The catechism will show us later that the soul, aided by supernatural graces alone, is capable of meriting that happiness which is supernatural or above our nature. Hence we take care of the soul when we strive to gain heaven, our destiny after this life. When through our own fault we lose eternal happiness, we lose our soul; and since there is no middle state between heaven and hell after the last judgment at the end of the world, when we forfeit heaven we deserve hell, and our soul is lost forever. Likewise, when we save our soul, we save our soul

from hell, and since there is but one alternative, we then attain eternal happiness.

This reason for striving to obtain eternal happiness in the care of our soul is so cogent, so practically and supremely important, as well as so clear and evident, that it must convince the feeblest mind as well as the deepest thinker.

There are other reasons, why we should take more care of our soul than of our body, and among them are: that the soul is by far the most noble part of our being; that it is made to the likeness and image of God; that it is destined for a union with its Creator; that it rules the body and is principally responsible to God; for the body is only an instrument for the soul's communication with the material world aroundus, and hence the body may be partially neglected or weakened, without injury to its mistress; again, the greatest minds often dwell within the feeblest bodies, and moreover the body with its lusts and sinful desires is an obstacle to the soul in its best and greatest efforts towards holiness and perfection; but all these reasons pale before that of the absolute necessity of saving our soul from eternal punishment and of reaching the end, for which we were created by God.

9. What must we do to save our souls?

To save our souls we must worship God by faith, hope and charity: that is we must believe in Him, hope in Him and love Him with all our heart.

The answer of the catechism explains further, why God created us and what we must do to save our souls and reach our eternal destiny; but even Rationalists might admit that God made us to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him in this world and to be happy with Him forever in the next, provided it be understood that the happiness hereafter consists in a natural enjoyment of all God's works, and that all our knowledge of Him and of the worship due Him be acquired by the exercise of man's reason, and furthermore that His commandments be fulfilled by the natural power of man's will, without aid of a divine Revelation or supernatural grace.

The natural religion of the Rationalists is rejected in this number and revealed religion is upheld instead. The catechism lays down in three fundamental truths the whole economy of the Christian Religion, based on the Revelation made by God to man; for all revealed truth belongs to the domain of one of the three divine virtues, viz., faith, hope or charity. Indeed these virtues

suppose revealed truths which we are bound to believe, a supernatural destiny and the means to attain it, which we must hope for, and a divine law prescribing our duties, supernaturally made known to man, which we must observe to merit our destiny. (Cf. Nos. 105-108).

The catechism thus affirms a revealed religion of which the Creator and the Ruler of the universe alone can be the Author and Founder. We shall not stop here to prove that God can reveal to His rational creatures supernatural truths, the knowledge of which they could not obtain by natural means. He, Who has given to men the faculty of acquiring from day to day, by their own exertions, greater and greater knowledge, cannot be limited in His power of communicating with them, either directly or indirectly. Rationalists who deny such a power to an all-wise and almighty God, strive to dethrone the very God they pretend to worship.

Religion, from the Latin "religare." (to bind, to attach,) comprises all the obligations of man towards his Maker. If we had been created by God and been endowed with understanding and free will, but left with no other alternative than to be guided by our reason in all our thoughts, words and actions, our duties towards God and our fellow-men, resulting from our creation and God's kind providence, would constitute a natural religion, such as Rationalists proclaim; but as God has destined us for a supernatural life hereafter in heaven, and has willed that we merit that destiny, revelation follows as a necessary consequence. For neither that supernatural destiny nor the means to reach it could otherwise have been known to us. God has revealed Himself to man from the moment of his creation, first through Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, and thereafter through the Patriarchs, through Moses and the Prophets, and lastly through His only Son, Jesus. God Himself has been our Teacher and since He cannot deceive us nor be deceived, we must believe all He has revealed to us. To that belief the virtue of faith inclines us. Among the truths He has taught us, are promises of a future reward and of the supernatural means of grace to obtain it, and since God is faithful in His promises, we are bound to trust in Him and rely upon His promises: to that confidence the virtue of Hope inclines us. Lastly, our final destiny hereafter is a promised reward, dependent upon our fidelity in God's service, and since God has laid down the obligations and duties to be observed and has a right to demand our services, we are bound to keep His precepts: to that service the virtue of charity inclines us. Thus God Himself, by infusing into us in baptism the virtues of faith, hope and charity, helps us to believe in Him, i. e., to believe all

He has taught; to hope in Him, i. e., to trust in His promises, and to love Him, i. e., to observe all His Commandments, for "If any one love Me," says our Lord, "he will keep My word." (John xiv. 23).

Whereas we worship God by faith, hope and charity, and whereas this worship contains all that He demands of us, the catechism, which teaches us all we must know and do to save our souls, is usually divided into three parts: one regards all that we have to believe; the second part regards the means of grace, the sacraments, prayers, etc., by which we trust to reach our supernatural destiny by continuing in God's grace and friendship; and the third part regards our love for God, evidenced by the strict observance of His Commandments. (Cf. Introd. to Sacraments).

10. How shall we know the things, which we have to believe?

We shall know the things, which we have to believe, from the Catholic Church, through which God speaks to us.

The truth of this answer has such a practical bearing upon our lives that its importance cannot be overestimated. It is a cardinal truth, which, having been misunderstood or not believed, has divided the civilized world into hundreds of different religions, whose adherents are all eager to defend their respective belief, by polemic disputes, by attacks and counter-attacks on their adversaries, and who have often resorted to violence in the defense or the propagation of their various systems.

Rationalism has appealed to reason as the only source of religious truth and obligations, denying even the possibility of revelation. Mohammedanism relies on the supposed revelation made to Mohammed with the Koran as its interpreter. Brahmanism recognizes the Vedas as containing the religion revealed by Brahma, of which the Brahmins or priestly caste are the only authoritative exponents. Buddhism, an outgrowth of Brahmanism, by rejecting the Vedas, seems to rely on private revelation and on the teachings and example of Buddah, and professes to lead its votaries to perfection, stage by stage, until by several reincarnations the perfect Buddhist is placed among the deities. Protestants, having rejected the authority of the Catholic Church, and holding that the Bible contains the whole Christian religion, have substituted their private interpretation

for the authority of the Church, and, as was inevitable, have become divided into numerous sects, with the prospect of ultimate disintegration.

The Jews are in a most peculiar position since they have failed to acknowledge Christ, Our Saviour, as the Messiah promised by their prophets. The Old Testament is still their only source of knowledge of revealed truth. The orthodox Jew still follows the law of Moses; but the sacrifices of the Old Law ceased with the destruction of the Temple, and the Jews of to-day, though a distinct race, are without a nation, without a sacrifice and therefore without a real priesthood and authoritative expounders of revealed truth.

Catholics alone have the only rational way, the only secure way for the learned and the unlearned, for the rich and the poor, to arrive at a knowledge of revealed truth and of the obligations which it imposes. Christ, Our Saviour, has proved by His holy life, by His heavenly doctrine and His numerous miracles, that He is the Son of God. After an ignominious death and a glorious Resurrection, both foretold by Himself, He ascended into Heaven. But before His wonderful Ascension, He established a priesthood with special powers, and this priesthood, composed at first of twelve Apostles, witnesses of His life and teachings, chosen and fully instructed by Himself, was commissioned to preach His doctrine, the Gospel of good tidings among all nations, with the promise of His assistance until the consummation or end of the world. Hence this apostolic mission extends to their successors as long as the world will last. The Apostles and their successors were thus set apart to continue the mission the Saviour had begun. Could Christ, the Son of God, Who is equal to God the Father in wisdom and holiness, have raised up such a body of men and their successors as could possibly deceive us? Could we be so unreasonable and blind to our own interests as to deny them submission and obedience, when He says to them: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me?" (Luke x. 16).

Now those men chosen as teachers, priests and rulers by Christ, the Son of God, as the history of His life fully sets forth, constitute the teaching, priestly and governing body of the Church; and as Christ has promised them light and aid until the end of time, that same authority must likewise endure. (Cf. Nos. 114-135).

How shall we reconcile what is taught here with what was said in the Introduction on the subject of the three sources of Revelation, viz., Holy Scripture, Tradition and the decisions of Holy Church? It was said there that Revelation is, as it were, the fountainhead whence we derive all our knowledge of supernatural truth. True, no one but God may add to the deposit of faith or retrench from it one iota, but how are the truths of Revelation communicated to us? Through three sources: viz., a) Holy Scripture, or the written word of God; b) Tradition, or the word of God communicated orally by the Apostles and their successors throughout the length and breadth of the Church, from the Apostles' time to our day; c) the decisions of the Church, or authoritative teaching of the Apostles and their successors. Have these three sources equal weight? As the Holy Scriptures are divinely inspired, what they clearly teach must be accepted as truth; what constant Tradition clearly sets forth as the word of God is equally binding, if taught everywhere in the Church and constantly to our day; and as the authority which Christ gave to His Apostles must continue in their successors, their decisions are likewise to be accepted. But the Holy Scriptures do not contain all the word of God, and many passages are of a doubtful meaning; likewise Tradition with respect to some particular truths or dogmas may be somewhat obscure, or not uniform at all times and places, or the change in living languages may alter the sense of words and expressions, or finally a supposed truth may not be a clear deduction from another truth clearly taught. In all of these cases where shall we go for enlightenment and find an authoritative ruling? Where is the supreme court which, in the foregoing doubts or similar ones, shall decide the question? There should be no difference in opinion on that point; the Master has spoken too clearly to be misunderstood: the decision in all matters regarding the teaching of the Saviour rests with the Apostles and their successors, the Bishops of the Catholic Church.

"Search the scriptures," is a mandate urging an advisable and laudable work on the learned of humble and pious mind; but it imposes an impossible task on the unlettered, and to study the traditions of all the churches of the centuries that

have passed since the time of Christ, is still more impracticable. How many could devote the necessary time to either, even if they possessed the learning? The only feasible, the only practicable way for all people of every condition to arrive at the necessary knowledge of revealed truth, is the one chosen by the Master Himself. He said to His Apostles: "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned"; "Hear the Church"; "He that despiseth you, despiseth Me." The disciples of Christ could not have misunderstood their Master, and therefore in obedience to His command, "They going forth preached everywhere". (Mark xvi. 20). Likewise their successors have always done and will continue to do, until the end of time, what Christ enjoined upon them: preach the Gospel to all nations, to all peoples, to all tongues, to learned and unlearned, to rich and poor, without distinction of race or color.

11. Where shall we find the chief truths, which the Church teaches?

We shall find the chief truths, which the Church teaches, in the Apostles' Creed.

From this question and answer we learn that there is here only question of the principal truths taught by the Church, and the catechism says that these are found in the Apostles' Creed.

Among the early Fathers the Creed was also called a symbol (symbolum) or a sign, a mark, a passport by which Christians distinguished themselves from those of a different faith. St. Augustine uses the Latin word "symbolum" for a profession of faith, but the idea is nearly the same.

The twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed comprise only a small portion of what the Church teaches, and hence we must believe not only what is contained in the Apostles' Creed but all else that the Church proposes as revealed truth, whether it be found in creeds or in Holy Scripture, or in Tradition, or in the decisions of Holy Church.

Why is this creed called the Apostles' Creed? Did the Apostles compose the Creed? This seems to be certain from the fact that the early Fathers speak of the Creed as already in use in all Christian communities of their time. The very name of Apostles' Creed favors that conclusion. As a rule, we may affirm without fear

of contradiction, that, in matters of faith, whatever has been always taught and for which no time can be assigned for its beginning, comes from the Apostles themselves. It is more than probable that the Apostles composed the Creed before they separated to preach the Gospel throughout the world.

Besides the Apostles' Creed there are other creeds in use in the Church: viz., the Creed of the Council of Nicea (A. D. 325), recited or sung in the Mass on Sundays and certain other Feasts of the Church; that of the Council of Constantinople (A. D. 381), an amplified form of the Nicene Creed; that of St. Athanasius prescribed for priests in the office of Prime on certain minor Sundays; the Creed of Pope Pius IV, used when some important office is conferred on the ministers of the Church.

12. Say the Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;
Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;
He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost,
The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints.
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And life everlasting. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed consists of twelve articles of which the first treats of God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth; the second to the seventh inclusive refer to Jesus Christ, the only Son of God the Father, and to the work of our redemption; and the last five articles relate to the Holy Ghost and to our sanctification, particularly attributed to Him.

These articles of the Creed form the subject of several lessons; but before we treat them separately, it is important that we should explain what specific obligations these and other articles of our faith impose upon us, and whether they are equally binding upon all the faithful.

From what has been said we learn that all revealed truths without exception must be believed by all Catholics alike, when these truths have been proposed for belief by the Church; but we should not conclude from this that every single truth of revelation has to be believed explicitly; for that would necessitate an actual and explicit knowledge of everything Christ has taught, whether it be found in the Bible or in Tradition or in the decisions of the Church, a thing which would be impossible for the greater number of Christians. Therefore in the act of faith, after expressing our belief in God, in the Blessed Trinity, in the Son of God as our Redeemer and our Judge, we add: "I believe these and all the truths which the Catholic Church teaches." By this conclusion we signify our implicit belief in all revealed truths, even in the truths, of which we may have no knowledge.

What truths must we know explicitly?

In order to answer this question properly, we will first distinguish two kinds of obligations: (a) the first regards those truths the ignorance of which would exclude us from heaven, whether such ignorance in adults be culpable or not; and (b) the second obligation relates to truths which we are commanded to know and believe, but of which an inculpable ignorance would neither be sinful nor subject us to eternal loss. Thus the knowl-

edge of the first kind of revealed truth is necessary for salvation, and that of the second kind is only imposed on us by God's command, fully set forth in the teachings of the Church. One that remains in culpable ignorance of the latter truths, which we are commanded to learn, sins mortally, and perseveres in his sin as long as he neglects to learn them.

It is plain that the knowledge of any truth necessary for salvation is also commanded by God, and it is equally evident that as all people are not of the same capacity and condition, they cannot be equally bound to learn the same truths of revelation and in an equally perfect manner.

The articles of the Apostles' Creed must be learned by every Christian as soon as he arrives at the use of reason and one, who through his own fault, does not know them, sins grievously. Likewise some knowledge of the nature and effects of the Sacraments must be gained by those who have to receive them; and a general knowledge of the duties of each one's state of life is also required in order to fulfill them properly.

Teachers in Catholic schools must have a fuller knowledge of the principal truths of our holy Religion, because they have to teach them to those under their charge; and a still greater knowledge is required of the ministers of the Church, because they are her official teachers and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.

What truths must necessarily be known to save our souls? Many holy and learned men maintain that these four are necessary: first, that there is one God; secondly, that there are in God three divine Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; thirdly, that the Son became man for us; and fourthly, that God rewards virtue and punishes evil. In practice this opinion must necessarily be followed, for we should take no chances in regard to the affairs of our salvation.

Still there are also many other theologians who hold that only two articles of belief are absolutely necessary for salvation: viz., first, that there is one God, and secondly, that God punishes the evil-doer and rewards the virtuous.

The strongest argument in favor of the latter opinion is that the Jewish people before the coming of Christ, were not clearly taught the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, although they expected the Redeemer to come; for such expressions as "Spirit of God" could hardly have clearly designated the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. Another argument, equally strong is found in the fact that many savages in the interior of Africa, for example, have never heard of the truths of the Gospel, nor has a ray of light come to them about religious matters, except what their own reason may teach them; for such as these, it would seem that the knowledge of a beneficent God, Who rewards the virtuous, and of a just God, Who punishes the evil-doer would be sufficient for salvation.

LESSON THE SECOND

ON GOD AND HIS PERFECTIONS

13. What is God?

God is a spirit infinitely perfect.

The question: "What is God?" is equivalent to the question: "What is God considered in His essence or His nature?"

We cannot comprehend God's essence, for nothing in creation around us can give us any true idea of God, and our knowledge comes to us originally through our senses from the created world around us. To give a clear definition or to have a true notion of God would require that we see God as He is, i. e., His nature or essence, and human words would fail to express the beauty and grandeur of the sight. It is evident that God has no material body, for all that is matter, being composed of parts, is subject to change and movement, a condition that cannot be predicated of God. We first form, from our perceptions through the senses, certain concrete notions, and whatever further truths we arrive at by the acts of the intellect, joined to the faculty of memory which retains the concepts and conclusions we have formed, are obtained by analysis, by abstraction from concrete notions, by comparisons, by synthesis and by kindred acts. The truths of revelation guide our intelligence in the investigation of abstract truths, and free our mind from erroneous judgments and conclusions, and other serious errors to which our limited intellect unaided by revealed light, would necessarily lead.

The difficulties which our reason encounters in its search for a true understanding of the nature of God, have made many

a deep and well-disposed mind fall into an error known as Ontologism. These men allege that since we have a notion or idea of the Infinite, and since this notion cannot be obtained by the operations of the soul on the perceptions derived from the created world, this notion necessarily comes to us from the presence of the Infinite before our mind.

Thus, Ontologism claims a partial sight of God. To refute this system, we simply ask: granted for the moment that we cannot arrive at the concept of the Infinite by our unaided reason, cannot Revelation have given us some notion of the infinite Being, the Infinite?

The name God gave Himself is "I am Who am," i. e., Yawe, erroneously pronounced Jehovah; for thus we read in Exodus (iii. 13, 14): "Moses said to God: Lo, I shall go to the children of Israel and say to them: The God of your fathers has sent me to you. If they should say to me: What is his name? What shall I say to them? God said to Moses: **I am Who am.** He said: Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: **He Who is** hath sent me to you." This passage of Holy Writ seems to assert conclusively that God's essence consists in His absolute existence as a self-existent Being. He is, He exists, and exists absolutely and necessarily. God is "the absolute Being" as He owes His existence to no one. He is what He is necessarily, without possibility of being otherwise than as He is. He is necessarily without limitation; for nothing can be added to Him or taken from Him. The abstract idea of being, which belongs to all beings, is not applicable to God; for all beings but God, no matter how perfect, are dependent and contingent, and hence something can be added to their perfection, for it is more perfect "to be" by nature or to have in oneself the reason of one's existence than to be dependent upon other beings, which is equivalent to being contingent upon their existence.

We may now note that sound reason again agrees with Holy Writ in the passage where God calls Himself "He Who is." God's nature or essence is His existence.

We have just shown that the abstract notion of existence is not applicable to God. What existence can we attribute to God but a concrete existence, an absolute, independent and necessary existence, an existence that has in itself all the reason for its existence? It is self-existent and since such an existence is necessary, it is necessarily all that it is. Now that is precisely what we say of God. Hence God's existence does not differ from His nature or essence. God is His whole existence, as He is His whole nature or essence.

Again, can you associate with an absolute and necessary existence any notion of matter? In no wise; for all matter is contingent and dependent. Can you limit self-existence to time?

Again no; for an absolute necessary existence always was and always will be necessary. Can you limit self-existence to place? Decidedly no; for there is no reason to make an absolute, necessary existence more necessary in one place than in another. It is always and everywhere necessary.

In like manner we may consider all the absolute attributes of God, and our judgment will fully and clearly attest that, what is opposed to them, is also opposed to the notion of self-existence.

Finally, such a self-existence is always in action, as it always has the power of maintaining its self-existence; and hence we see again that such an existence does not differ from God's nature and from all that He is; as God is His nature or essence, He is likewise His existence; or, in a word, His nature is His existence.

When the catechism says that God is a spirit, we understand by it that there is nothing material in God, that like spirits He is indivisible by nature, and that like all spirits we know of, the angels and the souls of men, He has understanding and free will. On the other hand, God is unlike our souls and the angels because, if they are indivisible in their nature, their acts are divisible, successive and intermittent, which cannot be said of the necessary Being, God.

We have the authority of the Saviour Himself that God is a spirit; for speaking to the Samaritan woman, He said: "God is a spirit; and they that adore Him, must adore Him in spirit and truth" (John iv. 24). But if God is a spirit, a pure spirit without a material body, why does Holy Scripture say that He has eyes and ears, a right side and a left side? This is only a figurative way of speaking, for God cannot have material eyes, or ears, or hands; and by these expressions we mean that, as He is present everywhere and totally in every place, He knows all things, even our most secret thoughts, words and actions. His hands and arms designate His almighty power, as His eyes and His ears denote His knowledge; and by His right and left we understand the respective places of those who are to be honored, or despised and rejected by Him.

After saying that God is a spirit, the catechism adds "infinitely perfect." A perfect being is one that has all the qualities befitting its nature; and as God, being necessary, is necessarily what He is, He possesses all the perfections of His existence.

God is also the most perfect of all beings, because He is the efficient cause of all that exists. He possesses all the perfections of creatures, and hence He is the most perfect of all the beings of which we have any knowledge; yet that does not strictly imply, by itself, that God is infinitely perfect.

By the expression "God is infinitely perfect," we mean that God's perfection has no limit, and that nothing could be added to God's nature or essence to make Him more perfect. We conceive the infinite only by comparison between one being and another and, to do that, we have to begin with one attribute of the beings we compare, e. g., their wisdom. Solomon was the wisest of all men, but I can imagine a man still wiser, one that has not only all the learning of past ages, but even of future ages, even all the knowledge of all possible beings. Further in my imagination I could add some wisdom to that most wise being. But is there no being, to whose wisdom nothing could be added to make him still wiser? Yes, the supremely or illimitably wise, in fine, the infinitely wise Being, God. Having done the same thing with all the other perfections, such as goodness, holiness, justice, immensity, eternity, etc., we arrive at the concept of the most perfect being, and finally at the notion of a being, to whose perfection nothing can be added, that is, a perfection without limit, or infinitely perfect.

God is infinitely perfect.

God is necessary, and has in Himself the sole reason for His existence, as we have explained before; and being necessary, He is necessarily **"all that He is."** He is what He is, for His essence is now and always will be the same, because He cannot be otherwise than **"what He is."** If God's nature or essence is necessary, so that He cannot be anything other than "what He is," He is immutable and not subject to change. Now, the **"finite"** is by its very notion limited, and therefore subject to change, for something can always be added to it; consequently being subject to change, it is not immutable. If God Who is immutable could be finite, He would be immutable and mutable at the same time, which is a contradiction; hence God is infinite, i. e., nothing can be added to His perfection; He cannot have a more perfect existence, or greater perfection in His attributes, and no new attribute or perfection can be added to His infinite perfection.

From God's absolute perfection, we deduce the following notions which are sometimes called "absolute attributes" of God, and which complete our notion of "the absolute Being": viz., simplicity, perfection, infinity, immensity, immutability, eternity and unity. By God's simplicity we mean that in Him there is no composition; for **"whatsoever He has,"** He is. By perfection we mean the best condition or state possible. God is perfect; because there can be no betterment in His actions or state of existence. By infinity we mean that God possesses all perfection in the highest degree possible. And therefore He is said to be infinitely perfect. By immensity, we mean that there is no limit in God as to place. Immensity is attributed to Him, because He is everywhere what He is. We understand by immutability that in God there is no change, and as God is the selfsame God in all places or everywhere as well as always, i. e., in the past, present and future, He is said to be immutable. By eternity we mean that God has no beginning or end, that He always was and always will be, and that He has always the full and perfect possession of an interminable life. He is the Eternal. By the unity of God is understood that no two or more beings can participate in God's essence; there cannot be two infinites, and since God cannot communicate His infinite perfection to any other being, there is but one God. God, being infinite, is infinite in all perfections; for He, that is infinite in one perfection, is necessarily infinite in all perfections. Those truths follow from the notion of every infinite perfection; omnipotence would not be infinite, if it were not eternal, immense, immutable, etc.

14. Had God a beginning?

God had no beginning; He always was and always will be.

The answer of the catechism is equivalent to saying that God is eternal. Eternity is one of the absolute attributes of God and follows from His necessary existence. God alone is necessary; if God did not necessarily exist, nothing would exist, for He is the efficient cause of all else that exists. As God is a necessary being, He is necessary in the past, in the present, as well as in the future, and therefore can have no beginning nor end. Therefore, Scripture says of God: "Who is, Who was, and Who is to come." (Apoc. i. 8). He is from eternity to eternity.

15. Where is God?

God is everywhere.

Not only is God everywhere, but He is everywhere what He is, or He is totally in every place, that is, with all His attributes. The attribute of God by which we recognize that He is in every place and in all things, and that all things are in Him, is called His immensity. Holy Scripture calls Him immense. (3 Kings, viii. 27).

Our reason likewise teaches us that the infinitely perfect God possesses all absolutely pure perfections, to the exclusion of any imperfections that would detract from His infinite perfection. If there could be a place where God is not, God would be limited by that place, which is impossible, for He is independent and perfect without limit, that is to say, infinitely perfect. "In Him we live and move and are" (Acts xvii. 28).

God finally is everywhere alike; but there are places where He shows particularly the evidence of His presence in the exercise of His perfections, of His justice, of His will, etc., as, for instance, He manifests His fidelity to His promises in heaven, and His goodness and willingness to hear us in our churches.

16. If God is everywhere, why do we not see Him?

We cannot see God; because He is a pure spirit and cannot be seen with bodily eyes.

Our soul is also a spirit, but man is composed of body and soul, and although our soul sees, through the sense of sight, all material things coming within the range of its vision, our soul cannot see itself or any other spirit. In its purely spiritual operations the soul can act independently of the body, but its first notions come to it by the senses. God and angelic spirits influence our soul for good, and evil spirits by suggestions of evil, but on our part, our soul has not the power to communicate with the outside world, except through our senses, and these, in our present condition, are not a means of direct intercourse with any other spirit than our own soul. The catechism does not say that our soul cannot see God, but that we cannot see God with the eyes of our body. In this life—since our soul can act only through the instrumentality of our eyes and other

senses—we cannot see God Who is a pure spirit without a body.

Physics explains the phenomena of sight: a camera or mirror is useful in illustrating how the form of an object passes through the pupil and retina of the eye to the brain. But how the impression, made on the brain—whatever it may be—is taken up by the soul, will ever remain, as long as we live, unintelligible and unexplainable. What wonder, if we cannot understand why our soul cannot see God in this present life?

17. Does God see us?

God sees us and watches over us.

God not only sees us, says the catechism, but watches over us. God sees us; because He is infinitely perfect: He would cease to be God; if He could not see all things that He has made; or rather, He could never have existed and nothing would exist. When God created the world with all it contains, Holy Scripture repeats each time after each day's creation that "God saw that it was good," and when He finished the work of creation, "God saw all the things that He had made and they were very good" (Gen. i). Holy Writ often reminds us of the all-seeing eye of God. By that truth we are as often warned to abstain from evil and to do good. The Jews were especially reminded of the omniscience of God by the eye which was painted over the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle. Hence the simple truth that God is everywhere and sees us everywhere, ought to induce us to conduct ourselves always so that the all-seeing eye of God may find nothing reprehensible in us, always and everywhere to preserve Christian modesty and to direct our thoughts and actions towards the good but just God, in Whose presence we are in all places and at all times.

God also watches over us. The care with which God watches over all things created by Him and directs all things to the end He proposed to Himself when all things where made, is called Divine Providence. Divine

Providence extends to all creatures of God, but of all creatures in the material universe, man, the only rational creature, is especially the object of Divine Providence, because the final destiny of man is union with God by the beatific vision. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 113, a. 2)

It is a matter of faith that the providence of God extends to all existing things whatsoever. God feeds the birds of the air which sow not, or reap (Matt. vi. 26); not a sparrow is forgotten, and all the hairs of our head are counted (Luke xii. 6, 7). It would be wrong to infer from the providence of God, the wicked doctrine of Calvin on predestination to certain damnation or certain salvation, no matter what one does, and whether one lives the life of a saint or of a criminal. Divine Providence has determined that man should act freely. It belongs to Providence, says St. Thomas, to ordain things toward their end, but although there are things, which necessarily happen, because He so willed it, as for instance the order of the material universe and the degrees of perfection to be found in creatures in general, Divine Providence, whilst determining that certain causes necessarily produce their effect, has likewise determined that man should be free and act freely. Therefore, not all things that happen are pre-ordained by God, but some are effects of the free will of man who has determined their causes. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 22, a. 4).

18. Does God know all things?

God knows all things, even our most secret thoughts, words and actions.

God knows all things knowable. God knows Himself, for such knowledge belongs to God as being infinitely perfect. He would not have the perfection of His rational creatures, men and angels, who at least have some knowledge of their nature, if He did not understand His own essence. He knows His essence or nature in an infinitely perfect manner. Only the Infinite can comprehend the Infinite.

God's knowledge of Himself and of all other things knowable is not acquired, as if it necessitated some labor, or as if this labor brought Him an accession of knowledge; His knowledge can be appropriately called intuition, in which there is neither change nor succession; or it may be considered as a single act of intellection that neither began nor will end; it is from eternity to eternity. "The spirit searcheth all things, yea,

the deep things of God. The things also that are of God, no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11). This intuition, this intellection, this infinite knowledge of Himself makes God infinitely happy: for by it He possessed the supreme good before anything was made, and a thousand worlds, more beautiful than the world we inhabit, could not bring Him an increase of happiness.

God's seeing Himself and knowing Himself and understanding Himself is nothing else but the same act of intellection. God's sight of Himself belongs to the attributes of God we have called absolute; but now we come to the attributes of God we call relative, that is, relative or corresponding to the things He has created or could create, i. e., possible or realizable creatures.

The knowledge or science of God belongs to the intellect of God, and to His will we attribute freedom, love, bounty, justice, liberality and mercy, according to the view we take of it; for as we cannot understand God by one act of our limited intellect, we are obliged to consider God under different aspects, and hence the different perfections we attribute to God.

God knows all things and therefore is omniscient; He sees things as they are whether past, present or future. His knowledge is eternal and the selfsame and depends not on His creatures, for He has all His knowledge from Himself. Hence:

1° God knows all things whether past, present or future with all their possibilities.

2° God knows all things, even possible or realizable, even if they will never exist. This knowledge necessarily follows from the knowledge He has of the nature of things and their combinations.

3° He knows all things depending on the free will of man as well as those depending on His own free will. He foresaw the denial of Peter, the treason of Judas and his tragic end. He knows those that will be saved and those that will be lost. Both the prophecies of the Old and of the New Testament clearly prove the foreknowledge of God.

4° What God foresees will necessarily come true and notwithstanding man will remain free.

These last two statements must be held as two undeniable truths, whether we can reconcile them or not. Man is a free agent, and what God foresees will certainly happen. By their juxtaposition these two truths seem at first contradictory. How can God foresee with unfailing certainty how rational creatures will act a thousand years hence? Is that not equivalent to saying that man is necessarily compelled to do what God has foreseen? By no means: God foresees what this or that man will freely do. In other words, the foreknowledge of God is not the cause of man's future actions, but God sees them as they are,

viz., actions freely performed by man. How God foresees with certainty future events depending on the will of free agents, like men and angels, cannot be determined: the last word on this subject has not been spoken. We can only exclaim: "Oh! The depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His ways!"

If we try to explain God's knowledge of the future by God's essence, in which He sees all things whatsoever outside Himself, we must bear in mind that God's knowledge and will are one and the same eternal act; and that the influence which God exercises on the free will of a rational being, contains no element of force or compulsion. For the liberty of man must be maintained and safeguarded from all errors. If on the contrary we try to explain God's foreknowledge by saying that God sees intuitively alike the future and the past as well as the present, we find it hard to conceive how God can see future events as existing, when in reality they do not exist. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 83, a. 1 and 3; q. 14, a. 13).

Without determining the manner of God's vision, the substance of a letter written by St. Thomas to an abbot of Monte Cassino, relating to the death of an impenitent sinner, may help our weak intellect to understand, how God sees intuitively the future acts of a free rational being: "The sinner sins freely. . . . In God, unlke man, there is no succession of knowledge...such as, by which man remembers the past, sees the present and prognosticates the future. . . . In God there is no change, nor can He be influenced by anything external: for Him there is no past or future. All future and past things are present before Him, and that from all eternity. From eternity He knows that the man in question would die at a certain moment, as we conceive it and express it; but God sees him die as I see Peter sitting down when he sits. But because I see Peter sitting, my seeing him sit does not oblige him to sit. Two things are here stated: I see Peter sitting and he sits; therefore both being necessarily true, Peter has to sit when I see him sitting. It would not be possible for Peter not to sit, when I see him sitting. Likewise it is impossible that things, which God foresees, shall not happen, but from this we cannot conclude that they happen from necessity or compulsion."

19. Can God do all things?

God can do all things, and nothing is hard or impossible to Him.

As God is infinitely perfect, omnipotence, being a perfection, must be one of the attributes of God.

God can do all things that involve no contradiction, or are not contrary to any of His divine attributes. God cannot do wrong; He could not punish unjustly; He cannot deceive or be in any way instrumental in deceiving His rational creatures; He cannot be unfaithful to His promises; He cannot love what is evil or hate virtue. He cannot make a circle, or a triangle quadrangular, and He cannot give free will to man and then constrain Him to do what He commands, for all these cases contain either a moral contradiction or a physical contradiction.

Note likewise that to omnipotence also belongs the power to do with the same facility what implies greater or less difficulty. It was not a more difficult task for God to create the whole universe than to create a piece of stone. In God the knowledge and the will to do and the act of doing it, are one and the same thing. There is an indefinite number of possible things, even of possible worlds, which will never exist, but which God could bring into existence; among those are the many things which we can conceive in our own imagination, provided they contain no contradiction in their essence or notion. A single volition of His almighty power would bring them all into existence, as He could also annihilate all things that He made by a single act of His all-powerful will.

20. Is God just, holy and merciful?

God is all-just, all-holy and all-merciful, as He is infinitely perfect.

When the catechism says God is all-just, all-holy and all-merciful, it means that He is infinitely just, infinitely holy, infinitely merciful. If God is infinite in one perfection, He is necessarily infinite in all perfections, for His essence or nature is infinite.

Holiness consists in willing and doing what is good, and, with God, willing and doing is but one act, as we have explained before. In God there is a will, and He naturally and essentially wills or loves what is good. Goodness is one of the attributes of God, and therefore He loves His own essence or infinite goodness; but even in creatures goodness is, in a manner, a participation of God's infinite goodness.

As to the justice, holiness and mercy of God, we should not hold these attributes as absolute, like God's unity, eternity, immutability, etc., Justice, liberality and mercy in God must not be considered as distinct perfections from the holiness, bounty, truthfulness, and fidelity of God.

If we see different perfections in God, that is due to the weakness of our intellect, as we remarked before; for we cannot grasp God's infinite nature: we necessarily see God under different aspects. In God there is no composition and there is but one perfection; a perfection that contains all His perfections, which is nothing else but His infinitely perfect nature or existence. The different perfections we see in God and His infinite perfection may be likened to the strongest light of the sun, which is unbearable to the naked eye, but when the light is passed through a prism we detect in it many colors and shades.

Hence we conclude that in God mercy cannot shut out His justice, or His fidelity to His promises to reward what is good and punish what is evil. In God we cannot separate His justice from His holiness, from His bounty and from all His other perfections.

God again is free not only in the acts of His omnipotence as when Scriptures says: He "worketh all things according to the counsel of His will" (Eph. i. 11), but also in bestowing the gifts of His liberality, bounty and mercy. Of His mercy Scripture says: "The Lord is sweet to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Ps. cxliv. 9). God is free to bestow His bounty and liberality and mercy as in His wisdom He sees fit without detracting in any way from His infinite justice.

St. Thomas after explaining how the works of God's bounty, liberality, mercy and justice are distinguished, extols the liberality and mercy of God, by saying that God without injury to His justice can pay more than is due and forgive sin and debt due by sinners, and not override His justice, but rather add to or exceed it; nevertheless mercy and justice must also conform to God's infinite wisdom, so that we should conclude that when God punishes the wicked, He acts according to His infinite justice and when He shows mercy to the sinner, it is an act of His infinite bounty, but infinite wisdom and holiness operate in all His works. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 21, a. 3 to 2).

LESSON THE THIRD

ON THE UNITY AND TRINITY OF GOD

21. Is there but one God?

Yes; there is but one God.

The Christian religion teaches the unity of God and by this we understand that there is but one divine essence or nature or one divine being whom we call God. God is the Creator of heaven and earth, and as there is but one God, there is but one Creator. God is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, immense, all-holy, all-good, etc.; and as these and all other divine attributes or perfections are applicable only to one being, the Eternal, the Omnipotent, etc., all the perfections of God are essentially but one infinite perfection, namely, His infinitely perfect existence, and "He Who is" is His most appropriate name.

The Pagans invented Polytheism, the belief in many gods, to whom they attributed different qualities, such as power, sagacity, fortitude in battle, etc., and hence we have a Jupiter, a Mercury, a Mars, etc. Even vice was deified among them.

The Manicheans, unable to explain the cause of evil in the world, admitted two distinct principles, co-existent and co-eternal: one of light, the source of all good, and one of darkness, the source of all evil.

Pantheists, by teaching that the whole universe is God, have rejected the personal God and substituted instead the blind law of nature, over which the Deity has no control. The god of Pantheism is infinite and finite, rational in man and irrational in stones, plants, animals, and other material things; he is virtuous in a saintly maid, and lewd and cruel in a Nero, etc. He is in fact a non-realizable monster. By what crimes would society at large be inundated, if this false philosophy could gain the ascendency!

Pantheism, by rejecting individual personality and destroying individual liberty and responsibility, opens wide the door to the basest passions in man. Murder, theft, and brigandage, and all other violations of the rights of others as well as all kinds of lawlessness differ only by name from the most heroic virtues; for the pantheistic god is the author of the one as of the other.

God revealed Himself to Adam and Eve as the one God, Creator of heaven and earth, and the denial of the unity of God was brought into the world only long after the deluge. When Abraham was called, and through him his posterity, to keep alive among men the knowledge of the true God and to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah, the Lord wished to be known as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and when the law was given to Moses to be communicated to the people of Israel, He announced in the preamble to the Decalogue who He is: "I am the Lord, thy God," and forbade first of all the honoring of other gods: "Thou shalt not have strange gods before me."

The Christian religion has for basic truth the unity of the Godhead, and by that doctrine of the natural law it unites itself with the patriarchal religion and the Mosaic religion, so that all these religions are one and the same, although in three different stages of development.

22. Why can there be but one God?

There can be but one God, because God being supreme and infinite cannot have an equal.

The arguments which prove the existence of God, prove likewise that there is but one God: the order in the universe, in which all things according to their nature tend to their perpetuation and their conservation, and the stability of the laws of nature, tending all to the same common end, prove conclusively that the Creator and Ruler of the universe is one and the same God.

The arguments taken from contingent and dependent beings presume, if they do not prove, one and the same necessary and absolute being. That of motion reveals one being that is not moved. The natural moral law, or our conscience, points to one and the same Lawgiver.

The concept or notion of more than one infinitely perfect God is contrary to reason, if it is not a contradiction; for the notion of infinitely perfect contains the notion that nothing can be added to it to make it more perfect, and therefore a being infinitely perfect has all the perfections of existing and even possible beings. When we say that there are two infinite beings, they are either equal or different; if different, one has a perfection which the other has not, and in that case the latter at least is not infinite; or, if they are both equal in all perfections, then neither would be God, for both would lack the perfection of being the reason or cause of the existence of all things. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 11, a. 3, c).

Again, an absolute being, a supreme and omnipotent being, cannot be conceived unless all things that exist depend on him, are inferior to him and are subject to his power, for he would cease to be absolute, if one being did not depend on him; he would cease to be supreme if one being were not his inferior; he would not be omnipotent if he could not control the actions of every other being.

23. How many persons are there in God?

In God there are three Divine Persons; really distinct and equal in all things, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Note in this answer, that in God there are three Persons, that is three Persons in one and the same God, and all three Persons are called divine, which means that each Person is God. Besides, we are taught that in reality they are distinct from each other although equal in all things.

The creed, that goes by the name of Creed of St. Athanasius, teaches as follows: "Who ever wishes to be saved must before all have the Catholic Faith, and unless he has kept it entire and inviolate, he will without doubt be lost for ever.

The Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in the Unity, without confusing the persons and without dividing the substance. For other is the person of the Father, other that of the Son, other that of the Holy Ghost; but the one and the same divinity, equal glory and co-eternal majesty belong to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, such is the Holy Ghost. . . . The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Ghost is eternal; and notwithstanding there are not three eternals but one eternal.

Likewise the Father is omnipotent, the Son is omnipotent, the Holy Ghost is omnipotent. Likewise the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God.

Likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Ghost is Lord; and yet not three Lords but one Lord; because just as we are compelled by Christian truth to confess each individual Person to be God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the Catholic Religion to say there are three Gods or three Lords."

There are three Persons in God, for "there are three that give testimony in heaven: Father, Son and Holy Ghost and these three are one," i. e., three distinct testimonies, given by three individual and distinct Persons, who have but one and the same nature.

What is a person? A man is a person; because he has an individual rational nature and can act by himself. In man body and soul form one person. In distinguishing men of the same nature one from another, even should we find them alike in all things else, we see in them an individuality, which makes it clear that Peter is not Paul.

These six things make up a person: a) his substance common to others of the same nature; b) rational nature common to others of the same substance; c) entire and complete being; d) incommunicable individuality; e) his susistence by himself, independently of others of the same nature; f) power to act by himself. When we apply the name "person" to God, we rightly and properly do so to indicate the eternal and necessary acts in God or within His essence and the correlative origin of the persons to one another. In God there are two essential acts: that of the intellect and that of the will. By His infinite intellect, He understands in an infinitely perfect manner His infinite nature or essence, and by His will He wills and loves Himself, the infinite Good. God that understands or knows is the Father; God that is known is the Son; and God that is loved is the Holy Ghost.

The name "person" has by some writers been employed to signify the nature or essence of God, but to avoid confusion, in common with all Catholic writers of to-day, we will apply it only to the relationship of origin, by which the three persons in God are distinguished. The relationship of God is not accidental, like that between man and man; but it is of the very essence of God, for in God's essence there is a threefold individual personality, or an individuality that is incommunicable and distinguishes one from the other.

The following numbers will further explain the divine relationship of the Three Persons in God.

24. Is the Father God?

The Father is God and the First Person of the Blessed Trinity.

The relationship or origin of the Three Persons in God is usually called "procession," and now we ask, from what person does the Father proceed? The Church teaches that He is the origin or source of the existence

of the other two Persons, and hence the Father proceeds from no one. Therefore He is called the First Person.

The relationship of the Three Persons is by the acts of the intellect and will of God. From the intellect in action proceeds what we call a concept, i. e., notion, or a word if the concept be communicated to others. This first act can not be communicated to any other person; it is, as it were, the individual privilege of the First Person, and He is called Father with respect to the Word, the concept of His intellect which is always in action.

25. Is the Son God?

The Son is God and the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

The Son is also called the only-begotten Son: "The Son is from the Father only; neither made nor created but begotten." (St. Ath. Creed) The Father speaking to His Son. says: "Thou are My Son; this day have I begotten Thee" (Ps. ii. 7); and He says again: "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son." (Heb. i. 5).

Why is the intellectual act of God and the first relation of origin called generation? Simply because there is something analogous to it in a human generation, insofar as a human father begets an only son of the same substance as himself, and shares with his sole heir all his earthly possessions. In a similar but ineffable manner the First Person by an eternal act of His infinite intellect brings forth One in all things equal to Himself, a perfect image or likeness of Himself, Whom He has constituted His heir. This procession is rightly called generation, as we are of necessity obliged to apply to things divine our notions of created things. The Greeks have also applied to the Son the name "Word," taken from the operations of the human intellect, from which, when in action proceed notions, images, or concepts which are retained in our memory and which, if we wish to call back or make known to others we express by a word. Hence a word represents the image or concept of our intellect, and the name "Word" is employed for the concept or image of the Father's intellect, begotten in the contemplation of the divine essence. The name "Word" is used in common by Latins and Greeks, as also is the word "Son" to designate the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

26. Is the Holy Ghost God?

The Holy Ghost is God and the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

The Saviour, the Son of God, confesses the personality of the Holy Ghost as distinct from the Father and Himself when He says: "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete." (John xiv. 16). "The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things." (ib. 26) "But when the Paraclete cometh, Whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, Who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me." (Ib. xv. 26)

From these citations we learn not only that the Holy Ghost, also called the Paraclete or Consoler and Spirit of truth, is God, but likewise that He proceeds from the Father and the Son; for although in one place it is said that He proceedeth from the Father, in the same text the Son Himself is said to send Him from the Father, and in another text, He is said to be sent by the Father in the name of the Son. Hence the natural conclusion is that as the Holy Ghost is sent by both Father and Son, He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and this doctrine of the Holy Scriptures and of the Church is taught by all the Fathers who have given an explanation of the procession of the Holy Ghost, and of the relationship which the Holy Ghost bears to the two other Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

We have seen that the Son proceeds from the Father by an act of the intellect, and that first procession is by generation, by which the Son is begotten by the Father; but there must be a second procession by the will and that procession is called that of love. The latter procession in God is the last, for within the essence of God the procession in the intellectual divine nature ends with the procession of the will. .(St. Thos. P. I, q. 27, a. 3).

Logically speaking, intellect precedes the will, and hence as in the first procession the Father is the First Person of the Blessed Trinity and the Son the Second Person, in the procession of love the Holy Ghost is the Third Person.

Let it not be understood that the word Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit or Spirit of God is proper only to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, as the name Father is proper to the First Person and the name Son to the Second Person, for the three Persons are equally entitled to the name "spirit" or ghost; but for want of a proper name that would distinguish the Third

Person from the Father and the Son, the name common to the Three Persons sufficiently distinguishes Him, as the other two Persons have a proper name. We are also to be reminded that there is properly speaking no priority of time in the origin of the Three Divine Persons, for what is eternal and essential to the nature of God can have no beginning nor succession; therefore, as to time, the first and second processions are equally eternal.

27. What do you mean by the Blessed Trinity?

By the Blessed Trinity I mean one God in Three Divine Persons.

The symbol of St. Athanasius has the following on the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity: "The Father is made by no one; neither is He created or begotten. The Son is from the Father only; not made or created but begotten. The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son; not made, or created, or begotten but proceeding. Hence one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity there is nothing anterior or posterior, nothing greater or less, but all Three Persons are to each other co-eternal and co-equal. So that just as in all things, as has already been said above, the Unity must be venerated in the Trinity and the Trinity in the Unity. Hence he that wishes to be saved, must thus believe about the Trinity."

28. Are the Three Divine Persons equal in all things?

The Three Divine Persons are equal in all things.

This Catholic doctrine is clearly taught and explained in the preceding numbers. Besides, since the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, their distinct personality is immanent or remains within the infinite essence of God, and each person shares equally in God's infinitely perfect existence; for as each Person, the Father like the Son and like the Holy Ghost, is from all eternity and will remain in pos-

session of the whole divine nature, the three Divine Persons are equal in all things, i. e., in all the divine attributes or perfections; so that whatever can be predicated of God, can truthfully and with propriety be predicated of each Divine Person.

The first **Ecumenical** Council of the Catholic Church assembled at Nicea in 325 to define the doctrine that the Son is consubstantial with the Father and therefore equal to Him. The Arians, or followers of Arius, a priest of Alexandria, taught that Christ, the Son of God, was inferior to the Father and not of the same substance. In that Council the Nicene Creed was adopted, in which Jesus Christ is called the Son of God, the only begotten Son of the Father, Who is from the substance of the Father, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, by Whom all things were made.

The second **Ecumenical** Council, held in 381 at Constantinople, was convened against the Macedonians, the followers of Macedonius, the bishop of that city, who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost, and in that Council the first Nicene Creed was enlarged, and this enlarged creed is the one which is now in use in the Catholic Church and is sometimes called the Creed of the Mass, because it is recited or sung in all Masses on Sundays, on all the feasts of Our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, of the Apostles, of all the Doctors of the Church, etc. In that Creed the Holy Ghost is called Lord and life-giving, Who proceeds from the Father, Who is adored together with the Father and the Son. Let it be noted that in that creed the Holy Ghost is said to proceed from the Father, as we also find in Holy Scripture, (Cf. No. 26) and on that ground some writers among the Greeks have concluded that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father only. They have held this erroneous doctrine ever since the schism of Photius in the ninth century, but the Latin Church has always confessed that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son as from one common principle. The case was finally settled in the second Ecumenical Council of Lyons in 1274, in which the eastern or Greek Church agreed to the tradition of the western or Latin Church on the subject. In this Council one thousand Fathers assembled together and among them 15 cardinals, 2 patriarchs, those of Constantinople and Antioch, 70 archbishops and 500 bishops. Since this authoritative decision the Greeks, who reject the authority of the Catholic Church, and who knowingly and obstinately hold that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father only, are not only schismatics, but must be considered as real heretics.

The enlarged Nicene Creed, called also that of Constantinople, by saying of the Holy Ghost that He proceeds from the Father, gave occasion to error or doubt about the procession of the Holy Ghost and it is generally believed that to obviate this misconception, the Spanish apologists were the first to add the words "and from the Son," which they found necessary in their efforts to convert the Arians of their country.

That the Greeks themselves from the remotest time of Christianity taught with all the Catholics of the world that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, is evident from the testimony of St. Basil (b. 329; d. 379), who wrote against Evonomus that the Holy Ghost is the word of the Son, as the Son is the word of the Father; and St. Cyril of Jerusalem (b. ab. 315; d. 386) in his catechism has this: "The Father gives to the Son and the Son communicates to the Holy Ghost," i. e., the Father communicates His whole substance by generation to His Son and the Son bestows or gives it to the Holy Ghost in the second operation by love, called simply procession; for, as love proceeds from the Father as well as from the Son and their love is mutual, the Holy Ghost, as we have explained, proceeds from the Father and the Son as from one common principle.

29. Are the Three Divine Persons one and the same God?

The Three Divine Persons are one and the same God, having one and the same divine nature and substance.

As there is but one God, the Three Divine Persons cannot be otherwise than one and the same God. "There are Three Who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these Three are one." (1 John v. 7)

Nature and person are two different things. By nature we understand all that is essential to one class (genus) of beings and which distinguishes one class from another class; or if a being be alone in his class, as is the case with God, then by nature we understand all that belongs to a necessary and absolute being, and whatever He has revealed of His own essence; e. g., our nature is composed of body and soul, and the divine nature in God consists in His infinite perfection, or, as we have stated already, in one absolute perfection, "His self-existence" with all the perfections belonging to an absolute and necessary Being.

Personality adds to any nature the notion of rationality with the power to act independently of others; e. g., our human

nature is a person; but the human nature of Christ is not a person, because it belongs to the person of the Son of God Who assumed it.

From this we learn that there is no contradiction in the Catholic doctrine of Three Persons in one God. If we said that the Three Divine Persons have each a separate or distinct nature, it is evident that "Three Persons in one God" would contain a contradiction; but faith teaches us that the Three Divine Persons have one and the same divine nature, and hence are one and the same God.

30. Can we fully understand, how the three Divine Persons are one and the same God?

We cannot fully understand, how the three Divine Persons are one and the same God, because this is a mystery.

31. What is a mystery?

A mystery is a truth, we cannot fully understand.

There are mysteries in our holy Religion, the principal ones being the mystery of the Blessed Trinity and the mystery of the Incarnation. They are nevertheless truths to be believed, because they were revealed to us by Jesus Christ, the Son of God while on earth, and all that He teaches is infallible truth. We believe the mysteries as revealed on the authority of a God. What greater certainty can there be?

What! Can we be bound to believe what we do not understand? Most certainly, for we are not allowed to doubt the veracity of God. It is not unreasonable to believe what we do not fully understand or comprehend. There are many things in nature around us that we do not fully understand, as for instance our soul's mode of communication by our senses with the outside world, for it involves acts by the immaterial on the material or vice versa. Would it not be truly unreasonable to expect that the God of created nature, which is so full of mysteries, could be comprehensible in His infinite essence and uncreated nature to creatures of so limited an intelligence as we are? When we consider that God is all-wise and almighty, must we not necessarily admit that God knows infinitely more than we know and can do many things incomprehensible to us? How much more incomprehensible must be the infinite nature of God! If God demanded of us credence of a proposition that

contains an evident contradiction or an absurdity, or even if God demanded of us that we should believe a proposition that can be scientifically proved false, it would be reasonable to reject such a proposition; but this is evidently impossible, for God is the Author of created nature and of all its laws, as well as of all revealed truth; He cannot contradict Himself nor can He reveal what true science can disprove. If there seemingly be a contradiction between science and revealed truth, we shall be forced to admit that the particular revealed doctrine at issue is not properly stated or set forth, or erroneously understood; or else that the pretended contradictory truth, is not demonstrated scientifically and therefore is not real science. To convince ourselves of this, it need only be asserted without a shadow of doubt, that for over nineteen centuries the dogmas of the Catholic religion have been assailed by pagan philosophers, by heretical sects without number and by modern freethinkers of all shades of opinion; yet notwithstanding the antagonism of all the united power of so-called scientific erudition, there is not one revealed truth that has not stood the test of credibility against these combined attacks.

Returning to the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, we must admit that without revelation no man however learned could have arrived at the knowledge of this sublime mystery, and that even after its revelation, it still remains an incomprehensible mystery. It must be moreover conceded that even with the knowledge of the Blessed Trinity through revelation, the necessity of its existence cannot be proved. Rationalists and infidels often object that Catholics believe in the Trinity and Unity in the same God. So we do; but these words cannot both be applied to the nature of God, or both to the three-fold personality in God. It would be wrong to say: Trinity of persons and Unity of persons; likewise it is absurd to say: Unity of nature and Trinity of nature; but we do believe the Unity of nature and Trinity of persons, or we venerate the Trinity of persons in the Unity of one nature. Likewise "three" and "one" cannot be applied to the same identical thing, so as to say three gods are one God, three natures are one nature, three persons are one person; but we worship three Persons in one God. "Person" and God are not interchangeable terms in the notions of our mind, nor are they identical in signification; and therefore there is no contradiction in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. We may then conclude by asserting without fear of contradiction that the mysteries of our holy Religion are above reason, because they surpass our feeble comprehension; but they are not **against** reason, because the light of our reason and the light of revelation have both their source in the same truthful God.

LESSON THE FOURTH

ON CREATION

32. Who created heaven and earth and all things?
God created heaven and earth and all things.

33. How did God create heaven and earth?
God created heaven and earth out of nothing, by His word only; that is, by a single act of His all-powerful will.

By the words "heaven and earth" is meant all things whatsoever outside of God, or all things that are not God; and by the word "create" we mean the making of something out of nothing, without any pre-existing material. God created heaven and earth in six days, says Holy Scripture (Gen. 1.); but of what length were those days? They may have been periods of time covering thousands of years. Many Catholic scientists maintain—and nothing prevents us from following that opinion—that the universe was created in a chaotic or rather nebulous state, from which the present universe was slowly evolved up to the creation of Adam. Scripture says: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," and by that we understand that in the beginning of time, He created all spiritual and material things: the spiritual beings, that is, that inhabit the highest heaven, and the earth which at first was void and without ornament, but which was adorned during the six days of creation; for with a firm faith it must be believed "That in the beginning of time, God made from nothing both creatures at the same time, the spiritual and the corporeal, the angelic and the terrestrial." (Council of Lateran under Innocent III)

The Apostles' Creed and other creeds in use in the Catholic Church ascribe creation to the Father. The Apostles' Creed begins thus: "I believe in God the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." Why this distinction? Is the Son not also almighty and likewise the Holy Ghost? We shall see later that

wisdom is especially attributed to the Son and holiness to the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding the fact that we have learned that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are equally wise and equally holy. This distinction by which almighty power is attributed to the Father, wisdom to the Son and holiness to the Holy Ghost, is to remind us how the three Divine Persons are distinct from one another by the two processions in the Blessed Trinity.

In No. 26 we have spoken of the two processions in the Blessed Trinity: one by the intellect and one by the will. In the first procession the Father begets the Son, and from the mutual love of the Father and the Son, in the second procession, the Holy Ghost proceeds, or rather He is the love of the Father and of the Son. God the Father is then the origin of the two other Persons and therefore the origin of all that exists; hence the creation is especially ascribed to the Father, although the Son and the Holy Ghost equally shared in bringing forth all created things from nothingness. In the first words of the Gospel of St. John, we are told that, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God . . . . All things were made by Him and without Him was made nothing that was made."

If St. John had intended to prove the divinity of the Holy Ghost, he could with propriety have begun his Gospel by saying that all things were made by the Spirit of God or the Holy Ghost, for all the exterior operations of the intellect and will of God, i. e., outside the divine essence, are common to the three Divine Persons. Moreover, all the operations of the divine intellect and will constitute but one act and that act in God is eternal. There can be no succession in God, as succession would imply a change, which is contrary to the immutability of God.

The Vatican Council has taught us what all Catholics must believe about creation out of nothing: "If any one does not confess that the world and all things contained therein, both spiritual and material, are, as to their whole substances, brought forth by God from nothing; let him be anathema."

This decree condemns the atomists, extreme evolutionists, materialists, and pantheists, and all others that either deny creation or admit a pre-existing matter before creation.

Pantheism in all its forms is an absurdity as we have seen (No. 21); and all the other doctrines who presuppose an uncreated or pre-existing matter, are likewise untenable and unreasonable.

Matter cannot make itself; it cannot exist by chance, because chance is nothing and never has made anything; it cannot

be self-existing, because what is necessary is also absolute and independent and therefore it is God.

To suppose the existence of atoms, uncreated or eternal, that by their inherent power or in an inexplicable manner may combine to form gradually into little and bigger worlds and finally reach the perfection of the universe, is to a sane man so absurd, that it is inconceivable how a man of sound mind could seriously devise and elaborate such a theory or system.

The system is opposed to the law of motion. For all that moves is being moved by something else and must finally lead to a being unmoved and immutable, and therefore to the existence of God.

How could matter generate life, and above all, intelligence and will, or a spirit endowed with those two qualities, i. e., a soul capable of knowledge, of judgment and determination, all properties which matter does not possess?

Holy Scripture tells us that: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth" (Gen. i. 1), and by that we understand that time began with the creation, for real and actual time can be said to begin only with a succession of acts or events. Whereas in God there are no successive acts, yet He willed from all eternity the creation with all the changes and successions resulting from the laws of nature and from His own free will. He has willed from eternity what happened yesterday, what happens to-day and what will happen to-morrow. Furthermore, God by His Providence preserves all His creatures; for "the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

If God, even for a single instant, withdrew His power from us or from anything else that exists, we or anything else abandoned by God would return to nothingness, and therefore God's Providence is, in a sense, rightly called a continued creation.

34. Which are the chief creatures of God?

The chief creatures of God are men and angels.

Man was created on the sixth day of creation, and the angels were probably created in the beginning before anything else was made, that is, on the first day, when God created heaven.

Man was created last, because all that was necessary for his existence or for his enjoyment was created before him, as we should reasonably expect.

On the first day God created besides heaven, the chaotic earth and the light; on the second day He separated the waters in the firmament from those below, and

made the dry earth appear; on the third day all vegetation was created on the earth, with the fruit and seed necessary for its reproduction, for the vegetable kingdom serving as the main sustenance of animal life, must have preceded the animal kingdom; on the fourth day the sun, moon and stars were made; on the fifth day God created the fishes of the deep and the birds of the air; and on the sixth day the other animals that live upon the earth, and finally when the habitation of man was made ready, man himself was created on this last day.

Since it is not certain what time the six days of creation represent (see No. 33), they may have been days of twenty-four hours or periods of undetermined length; or even they may have been intended as dividing the whole creation which was continuous and successive, so that Moses intended only to convey the idea that God successively created all things as related in Genesis, and the successive creations without reference to any time were called days.

Faith does not even oblige us to believe any of these conjectures, for the decree of the Council of the Lateran, if it is interpreted in its strictest and obvious sense would leave us to understand that all spiritual and corporeal beings were not created successively but at one and the same instant. Faith obliges us only to hold as a revealed truth, that in the beginning of time, God created all material things and spiritual beings out of nothing; the Church has decided nothing more on matters which geologists consider more or less conformable to their theory or to their incomplete science, still in its infancy. (Cfr. Wilmers, S.J., Handbook of the Christian Religion, and Guibert's S. S. Les Origines).

The creation of man has a special claim to our consideration, for we are doubly interested in our origin, our nature, and our destiny here and hereafter; all these subjects are fully considered in the catechism from No. 39 to No. 50.

35. What are angels?

Angels are pure spirits created without a body, destined by God to adore and enjoy Him in heaven.

Holy Scripture in both Old and New Testament makes mention of the angels at different times, and they are always represented as speaking and acting rationally, that is, as spirits endowed with intellect and free will.

They are spirits without a material body, and therefore different from man, who is composed of body and soul. They were not created like the body of Adam from something already existing, but were brought forth from nothing by God's holy will.

1. It is conformable to reason that God should have created beings superior to man, beings approaching nearer to God's own nature, that is, immaterial and incorporeal beings; for the gradual perfection in created things seems to demand it. When we admire the general scale of perfection in purely material things, in minerals, in plants, in animals, with a connecting link in man, who is both animal and spirit, perfect order is found to exist in the universe; and this order demands, it seems, that there be a pure spirit forming a link between God and man, for otherwise there would be a gap or blank in the scale of perfection.

Reason then proves false the doctrines of the Sadducees regarding the existence of angels and spirits: "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees confess both." (Acts xxiii. 8).

2. Angels are thus pure spirits without any composition of matter or form, for "a spirit hath not flesh and bones." (Luke xxiv. 39). Like our souls they are by nature incorruptible; they cannot be seen, or heard, or felt, and when we read in Holy Scripture that angels appeared in human forms, spoke, and had wings, it must be understood that these holy spirits assumed these forms in order to accommodate themselves to our nature, their wings indicating the swiftness of their passage from one place to another. We cannot communicate with the outside world without the use of our senses. God, says the Lateran Council in its creed, created "the spiritual and the corporeal world, that is, angels and the visible universe; and then man composed of soul and body." (St. Thos. P. I, q. 51). In the last article of Question 51 (a. 3 to 5) the Angelic Doctor teaches that when angels are said to talk, to eat, etc., as in the case of the Angel Raphael who accompanied the young Tobias, they practice no deception even in the eating of food, which angels cannot assimilate by digestion as animals can; but the food is converted in a natural manner into what food would naturally become without digestion or assimilation.

3. That the angels are legions in number is taught in Scripture, (Mat. xxvi. 53). Daniel (vii. 10) saw "Thousands of thousands ministering to Him (God) and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him," and St. Thomas (P. I, q. 50, a. 3) proves by their more perfect nature, far superior to matter, that their number is to us incalculable; and he tries to

demonstrate that the greater the perfection of a creature or the nearer its similarity to the Creator, the greater must also be the number of individuals of the same genus. If we carry that argument to its final conclusion, we should be forced to admit that angels are more numerous than human beings, and as man reproduces himself by generation from the beginning of his creation to the end of the world, we should conclude that angels are more numerous than the total number of men that have ever existed and ever will exist.

4. The destiny of the angels consists like that of man in the beatific vision of God and in seeing God face to face, that is, as He is. To see God is to adore Him as the Supreme Majesty, to worship Him as the infintely perfect Being, Who is all-good, all-wise, omnipotent, all-loveable, and worthy of the adoration of all spiritual creatures. They were also created to enjoy God, for the sight of God, infinitely good and amiable, is a joy forever. But as will be taught in another number, this happiness and joy was vouchsafed them only after they had merited it.

36. Were the angels, as God created them, good and happy?

The angels as God created them were good and happy.

Innocent III condemned the heresy of the Manicheans and others who taught that the demons are by nature bad, in the following decree: "The devil and other demons were indeed created good by God, but through their own fault they became bad."

All that God has created is good with the goodness or endowments essential to the end that God had in view in bringing each being out of nothing. Hence we learn (Gen. i. 31) that "God saw all the things that He had made, and they were very good." By their nature angels are spirits endowed with understanding and free will, and being pure spirits by nature, they are immortal. They were from the first instant of their creation not only good but also happy, for their superior knowledge acquired without labor or reasoning (St. Thos. P. I, q. 62, a. 1), and the consciousness of their excellent and exalted nature, of their superior intelligence and their free will for good or evil, would have imparted to them a true natural happiness. Furthermore, if they were destined to eternal happiness, this supernatural destiny must have been revealed to them in a supernatural manner, and this would bring them a still greater happiness.

Finally to complete their happiness, they may also have had knowledge of sanctifying grace, which probably was bestowed

upon them at their creation enabling them to merit their supernatural destiny, viz., the enjoyment and possession of their God for an endless eternity.

But with their creation began also their probation, for their eternal happiness was conditional on their fidelity to God by worshipping Him and loving Him. They were not confirmed in grace and impeccability, which necessarily accompanies the sight of God. These were to be merited and could be forfeited and lost forever.

37. Did all the angels remain good and faithful?

All the angels did not remain good and faithful; many of them sinned and were cast into hell, and these are called devils or bad angels.

Revelation teaches us that the happiness all the angels enjoyed for a time was lost to those angels that did not remain faithful to God; for "God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down by infernal ropes to the lower hell, unto torments." (2 Peter ii. 4).

The bad angels' sin was one of pride and disobedience, according to the common opinion of the Fathers of the Church; and St. Thomas (P. I, q. 63, a. 3) following in the footsteps of St. Augustine, St. Gregory, St. Bernard and other holy Fathers, taught that the sin of the fallen angels consisted in wishing to be equal to God , a wicked desire that was equivalent to a revolt against God. This doctrine considering the nature of the angels before their fall, is most probable, and if we admit that all the angels had received at their creation sanctifying grace, this opinion, says the Angelic Doctor, becomes certain. To say the least, one passage of Holy Scripture favors the above conclusion: the one where Isaias apostrophizes the chief of the rebels: "How art thou fallen, O Lucifer? . . . . Thou saidst in thy heart . . . . I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . . . I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High." (Is. xiv. 12-14).

Let us note here that, as all the demons of hell were angels before their fall and so are now called bad angels or devils, their natural and superior endowments were not lost; hence they retain their superior intellect and memory, they understand the nature of created things, the causes and effects of the laws of nature and accordingly they are dangerous enemies. Their will being confirmed in malice and hatred, they envy man's happiness, and all their efforts are bent upon procuring his damnation.

"Be sober and watch: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist ye, strong in faith." (1 Peter v. 8, 9). They have the power to suggest to our mind evil thoughts, desires and actions; they may excite in us passions and evil inclinations by placing before our imaginations alluring representations and pictures. But they cannot move the will, hence they are wily and full of malice, envy and hatred, and, although they are versed in all the artifices of deception, they need not be feared by the Christian who puts his trust in God. (St. Thos. P. I, q. III, a. 2, 3, 4). Resist him, strong in faith, says the Prince of the Apostles. If our faith is strong, if we take hold of the means of salvation, especially prayer and the frequent use of the sacraments, we may fully put our trust in God, Who, after we have suffered a little from Satan's attacks, will confirm and establish us in virtue and perfection. (1 Peter v. 10).

38. Where the angels created for any other purpose than to adore and enjoy God?

The angels were also created to assist before the throne of God and to minister unto Him: they have often been sent as messengers from God to man; and are also appointed our guardians.

The catechism here speaks of the destiny of the angels after the time of their probation or as they are in their present state, for although they were destined to assist before the throne of God and enjoy God, this state of supernatural happiness is one of reward for their service of God in the time of their probation.

We should not forget to distinguish in the angels, as in man, what they were by nature or what their natural endowments were, and what they were by special grace of God to arrive at their final destiny, and also, after the fulfillment of their destiny, what special ministrations have been required of them by God, ministrations that tend to God's honor and glory and to their own honor and happiness. It is certain that the angels at the instant of their creation did not assist before the throne of God, if we understand by this that the angels, from that instant, saw God face to face; for the fall of the bad angels would have been impossible; nor can we admit that God would have chosen them as our guardians until they were confirmed in grace and their happiness was forever assured.

Angels, as the catechism teaches, were created to adore and enjoy God in heaven. They were created in the highest heaven, where, before they could see God face to face, they had to merit their subsequent state of ineffable happiness. The angels who

had remained faithful during their short probation, were at once ushered, as it were, into the presence of God; their nature was transformed so that the dazzling sight of the infinite God filled them with an indescribable joy and happiness, and since they were not all created equal, nor equal in merit, the just God gave to each one a ministry in keeping with his merits.

There are, according to the teachings of the Fathers, nine choirs of angels, divided into three orders or hierarchies. To the first and highest order belong the seraphim, cherubim and thrones, and these assist before the throne of God. They may be compared to our state ministers or secretaries of State, of foreign affairs, of the interior, etc., in immediate attendance on the highest authority in the land, be it king or president. The second order comprises those who have a general supervision over things created, like princes and governors; and the third order comprises those who have personal care of peoples, of families, or of individual men and things. From among these last named our guardian angels are chosen. All those sent on missions of greater or less importance—no matter to which hierachy or order they belong—are called angels or archangels; for, although the latter properly belong to the third order, God may choose angels of the other two orders for a special mission of great dignity, just as special ambassadors are often sent between human governments. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 108).

Although we cannot with certainty state the nature of the revolt of the fallen angels against the Divine Majesty, for which Lucifer and his followers were hurled from heaven, the Doctors and Fathers of the Church all agree in attributing their fall to pride and disobedience. What we may sometimes hear or read of the commandment given to the angels and of the nature of their probation, is, apart from the probable opinion of St. Thomas, a mere conjecture or may be ascribed to the pious effusions of good souls in fervid flights of imagination. Among these is the opinion of some who think it probable that the angels were required to adore and worship Christ, the God-Man, Who had been revealed to them as the Saviour of fallen man. This can hardly be called probable, if we admit, what St. Thomas teaches about the fitness or propriety of man's creation, in order to form a link between the brute creation and the purely spiritual angels. Another opinion hardly probable is that man was created to take the place vacated by the fallen angels; this seems to be contrary to the common opinion among the Fathers, that the angels and the world with all it contains were created at one and the same time.

Guardian Angels. Our guardian angels merit a special place and consideration in this catechism. Although

we should honor all angels as friends and ambassadors of God, for we must give honor to whom honor is due, the special guardian of each individual person deserves from him a special worship; because each individual has, in his guardian angel, a special protector appointed and sent by God. What is his duty? He is the guardian of our souls and of our bodies. Wholly disinterested in his ministrations, he protects us against all the dangers which threaten us by night and day. He is always at our side; 1st, to defend us against the devil, for "the devil as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour," and if he cannot overcome our resistance to his temptations, he would do us bodily harm, were our angel not at hand to defend us. Our angelic friend delivers us from all danger of falling into sin, by good inspirations, by obtaining for us from God the strength and power to resist, by lessening the fury of the temptation or by driving the devil away altogether.

2nd. He also offers our prayers to God, prays with us and for us, and begs the good God to answer our prayers, if they be proper.

3rd. At the last hour when we are about to depart from this world and when the devil is doing his utmost to make us lose our soul, he defends us against the wily enemy, comforts us by inspiring us with Christian sentiments of lively faith, of firm trust in the divine Mercy and of humble resignation to God's holy will. He also endeavors to procure for the ward he has undertaken to protect, the last sacraments and the blessing of the Church, and he remains to offer to God our last sigh; finally he takes his triumphant flight into heaven when the favorable sentence has been pronounced on the soul by the just Judge, Christ Our Lord.

Do we owe our good angel anything for these **inestimable favors?** We owe our guardian angel: 1st, gratitude for all the help he has bestowed upon us and sincere love, for he is our most disinterested benefactor; 2nd, we should honor him, whom God honors with the mission of saving us from harm of body and soul; 3rd,

we should often invoke him and put our trust in him, for great power is given unto him; 4th, we should be prompt in obeying his suggestions and listen to his inspirations, often protesting that we are ready to follow his lead in all our undertakings. All these duties are clearly taught us in Tobias. How edifying and consoling for young and old is the consciousness of God's goodness and of His solicitude for our welfare, in sending us a messenger from His court in heaven to protect us, to guard us and defend us against all the many dangers of body and soul by which we are surrounded at all times from our birth to our last breath.

The angels are particularly honored on St. Michael's day, when the Church commemorates St. Michael, her special protector, and with him the whole court of heaven. Besides the Church devotes a particular day of the year to honor our guardian angels, and the holy Archangel St. Gabriel has also a special feast day, because he announced the mystery of the Incarnation to the Blessed Virgin and was chosen by God as the special protector of the Holy Family.

LESSON THE FIFTH

ON OUR FIRST PARENTS AND THE FALL

39. Who were the first man and woman?

Adam and Eve were the first man and woman.

When the world was ready for the habitation of man, and all things necessary or useful for his existence and comfort had been made, God created Adam and Eve, the first man and woman and the parent stock of the whole human race. God first made Adam from earth or clay and breathed into him a living soul. "And He (God) said: Let us make man to our image and likeness . . . . and God created man to His own image: male and female He created them. And God blessed them sayin: Increase and multiply." (Gen. i. 26-28). After describing Paradise in which Adam was placed,

Moses relates the formation of Eve: "And the Lord God said: It is not good for man to be alone: let us make him a help like unto himself . . . Then the Lord God cast a deep sleep upon Adam; and when he was fast asleep, He took one of his ribs, and filled up flesh for it. And the Lord God built the rib which He took from Adam into a woman: and brought her to Adam." (Gen. ii. 18, 21, 22).

Scripture is silent about how life was given to Eve, and therefore we must conclude that, whereas the formation of Adam's and Eve's bodies is described separately, because different, the creation of Eve's soul was similar to that of Adam's, i. e., God breathed into the rib of Adam, formed into a woman, a living soul.

Adam and Eve were created out of nothing; because the clay or earth from which their bodies were formed, was created out of nothing, and their souls, the noblest part of their being, was immediately and directly created by God.

From the narrative of our first parents' creation, we also necessarily conclude that the whole human race has descended from one man, Adam, and one woman, Eve; for "Adam called the name of his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all the living." (Gen. iii. 20; Cf. Acts xvii. 26). The doctrine of the Church on original sin, which infects all men at their conception, and the teaching of the Gospel that Christ, the Redeemer, died for all men, because all had sinned in Adam, suppose, if they do not prove what all Catholics believe, that Adam and Eve are the progenitors of the whole human race.

All the attempts of impious men to discredit the Bible narrative of Adam and Eve's creation have proved futile, and science and the Bible combine to attest that all individuals of the human family belong to one and the same species. When the so-called lower grades of humanity and those of the highest civilization have the power, as experience testifies, to reproduce indefinitely, through intermarriage, the same human species without any loss of fecundity, this test of species, as it is called, is conclusive. Whatever difference there may be between one individual and another is accounted for by the wide difference of their habits and by climatic conditions. Besides, as philologists maintain, the great similarity or identity of the roots of many words in the languages spoken on this earth, point to one and the same language at the cradle of humanity, and hence to a common origin.

The history of some of the nations of the earth would indeed contradict the Bible narrative, if such history, born of national pride, could be relied upon; but the origin of those peoples, claiming an antiquity of tens of thousands of years, is so mixed up with fables and ludricrous narratives, that their early annals are considered by serious-minded historians as a tissue of fiction and falsehood.

Although we have no absolute certainty of the age of the world, since God rested from the work of creation, it is still probable that it does not exceed 7,000 or 8,000 years. The Jewish and Catholic computations allow slightly over 4,000 years between Adam's creation and the birth of Christ, while according to the Septuagint version of the Hebrew text the intervening time would hardly exceed 5,000 years.

40. Were Adam and Eve holy and innocent, when they came from the hand of God?

Adam and Eve were holy and innocent, when they came from the hand of God.

That God created Adam and Eve innocent, that is, free from any guilt of sin, is evident; for the all-holy God cannot bring into being anything that is by nature evil or sinful; but the Creator need not necessarily have made man holy, for original holiness in Adam and Eve did not, according to St. Thomas, differ from original justice, by which among other gifts the body was subject to the soul, and the inferior powers of the soul were subject to reason, and reason and will were subject to God. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 95, a. 1, 2, 3, c). By the inferior powers of the soul are meant the appetitive and sensitive powers and inclinations, including the passions in so far as these could be said to exist in a soul in a state of innocence and holiness.

God also created Adam and Eve to His own image and likeness: 1st, by subjecting to their dominion the fishes in the waters, the birds in the air, and the animals on land, and by giving to them for their use, comfort and enjoyment, the whole universe; (St. Thos. P. I, q. 96) 2nd, by giving them a soul, a spirit that is immortal and endowed with understanding and free will, and 3rd, by destining them and the human race to a supernatural union with Himself and by adorning their soul with the greatest of all His gifts (the beatific vision excepted) sanctifying grace, which is nothing less than a kind of participation in the divine holiness and good-

ness, by which our first parents became the adopted children of God. (St. Thos. P. I., q. 93 o).

41. Which were the chief blessings, intended for Adam and Eve, if they had remained faithful to God?

The chief blessings, intended for Adam and Eve, had they remained faithful to God, were a constant state of happiness in this life and everlasting glory in the next.

The blessings, intended by God for Adam and Eve, if they had retained their original innocence and holiness, should be well understood; for, if we ignore them, we cannot understand what we lost by the sin of our first parents. Among the endowments of man, originally bestowed by God, we distinguish three kinds: the natural, the prenatural and the supernatural endowments.

1. The strictly natural endowments are those which are essential to man's nature; such as the union of the body and soul into one nature and one person; the five senses of the body to acquire perceptions from the material world; the subjection of the body to the soul, its mistress and its life; the faculties of the soul: will, memory, understanding, with the power of reasoning, judging and determining, and of acquiring knowledge, although subject to error; also a natural inclination towards good and a dread of evil; the power of self-preservation and of fecundity to propagate his species; and probably also a final destiny conformable to his nature, to be merited by observing a positive law, made known to him by his Master, or a natural law engraven by God upon the soul.

2. Preternatural endowments are perfections of the natural endowments, but they remain in the same species as those that are essential to man; and therefore no matter how perfect the preternatural endowments be, they are essentially inferior to the supernatural gifts that God conferred upon our first parents.

The preternatural endowments bestowed upon Adam and Eve were principally three: one relating to the body, one to the intellect and one to the will. Man is by nature subject to death, but Adam and Eve were created immortal, i. e., this natural life was to last until they were transported from earth to life eternal in heaven. By nature man is ignorant, subject to error and to deception, and he acquires the knowledge of many things with difficulty and only by great labor; but God gave our first par-

ents from the beginning an extraordinary knowledge of all created things in the universe, but principally of those that were necessary or useful to their happiness. Man by nature is subject to the temptations of the flesh and of other appetites with their sensitive evil inclinations; but God took away from them all evil inclinations, as set forth in the preceding number. Man is subject to many miseries, to sickness and other ailments of the body and soul, to labors and sorrows; but God placed them in the terrestrial Paradise where nothing was wanting for their comfort and happiness. (St. Thomas P. I, q. 94-97).

The objection that Eve was deceived by the serpent does not contradict the freedom of Adam and Eve from error, for, as St. Augustine explains, her inordinate aspiration to acquire knowledge of good and evil, promised by the serpent, made her deception possible: her evil will preceded the deception of the intellect.

3. Supernatural endowments are those which exceed all the natural powers of man, as they tend to a union of a finite being, man, with the infinite God in the beatific vision. There is but one supernatural endowment in man's creation and that is sanctifying or habitual grace, by which man becomes the adopted child of his Father in heaven with a right to the inheritance of the heavenly delights; and that one and only supernatural endowment was given to our first parents to merit and reach the supernatural destiny for which they were placed upon earth.

The preternatural and supernatural endowments were given to Adam and Eve only on condition that they remain faithful to God by fulfilling whatever He might impose upon them as a proof of their fidelity. Our first parents were undoubtedly acquainted with their eternal destiny and the condition, upon which they were to attain that place of blessedness and preserve here on earth the preternatural and supernatural gifts they possessed so abundantly. Furthermore, God had undoubtedly also revealed to them that all those preternatural and supernatural endowments would pass to the whole human race which would issue from them, provided they remained faithful, innocent and holy during the time of their probation.

42. Did God give any command to Adam and Eve?

To try their obedience God commanded them not to eat of a certain fruit, which grew in the garden of Paradise.

This answer tells us in what the trial of fidelity consisted, which God, during their probation, imposed on Adam and Eve and on which depended the confirmation

of all the preternatural and supernatural gifts, graces and virtues for themselves and for their posterity.

The answer tells us in what the trial of fidelity consisted, which God, during their probation, imposed on Adam and Eve and on which depended the confirmation of all the preternatural and supernatural gifts, gaces and virtues for themselves and for their posterity.

The consequences of our first parents' obedience or disobedience to the command of God cannot be the same for them and for their posterity. Their choice of fulfilling or not their obligation was personal and therefore would constitute a merit, if they remained faithful, or if they were unfaithful, a demerit, and hence their descendants would reap neither all the reward of their obedience nor all the guilt of their sin, nor deserve all its punishment.

If Adam and Eve had remained faithful to God, their posterity would have inherited, besides the natural endowments, all the wonderful endowments, gifts and virtues of the preternatural and supernatural order, which God had bestowed upon them; but this would not have assured the eternal salvation of everyone of their progeny; for each individual of the human race would have retained the free will to obey or disobey God; and each individual, when arriving at the use of reason would become accountable for his personal deeds and would have to give a personal proof of fidelity, whether the trial was to consist in the same prohibition or a similar one. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 100, a. 2). Likewise if Adam and Eve did sin, their personal guilt for which they deserved eternal punishment, could not fall with all its dire consequences upon any of their future offsprings.

In the Paradise, which Adam and Eve enjoyed and which was destined to be their earthly habitation, if they proved their obedience, there were two trees: the tree of life in the midst of Paradise and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Gen. ii. 9). The tree of life, if its fruit was eaten frequently, was to give Adam and Eve immortality, and the same happiness was to be vouchsafed to their descendants until, after a life of obedience to their Maker, they should be translated from earth to heaven without sickness, agony or death.

The tree of good and evil, also placed in the midst of Paradise, was therefore near the tree of life, and of the fruit of this tree they were forbidden to eat "lest

they die." "And the Lord God took man, and put him into the Paradise of pleasure, . . . and He commanded him saying: 'Of every tree of Paradise thou shalt eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat. For on whatsoever day thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death.'" (Gen. ii. 15–17). By the expression "die the death," God did not mean the loss of life of the body only but also the loss of the supernatural life of the soul and the loss of all preternatural and supernatural endowments as a consequence, as the history of the fall clearly proves.

The trial and probation of our first parents' obedience was a trial of the will. Their superior intellect infused into their soul with their existence, made it impossible for them to be deceived in the nature of the fruit of both trees in the center of Paradise; both were of their nature good, but upon eating of the fruit of the one, they were to be endowed with immortality and by eating of the prohibited fruit, their sinful act of disobedience was to open the eyes of their soul to understand the moral evil they were guilty of, and its lamentable consequences, viz.: the loss of all their preternatural endowments, of sanctifying grace, and of their supernatural destiny and its delights. Hence the name, "tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

43. Did Adam and Eve remain faithful to God?

Adam and Eve did not remain faithful to God, but broke His command by eating the forbidden fruit.

The fall of Adam and Eve is related in Genesis (iii. 1-7): "Now the serpent was more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth which the Lord had made. And he said to the woman: 'Why hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of Paradise?' And the woman answered him, saying: 'Of the fruit of the trees that are in Paradise we do eat; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of Paradise, God hath commanded us that we should not eat; and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die.' And the serpent said to the woman: 'No, you shall not die the death. For God doth know that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened; and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes and delightful to behold: and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband, who did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened: and when they perceived

themselves to be naked, they sewed together fig-leaves, and made themselves aprons."

In this short narrative of the fall of Adam and Eve we learn that it was a serpent that tempted Eve; but as a serpent cannot talk or reason, we conclude from this passage and from other parts of Scripture that one of the fallen angels, probably Lucifer, was the real tempter (Gen. iii. 13; 2 Cor. xi. 3). St. John (Ap. xii. 9) tells us that "the old serpent is called the devil and satan, who seduceth the whole world" i e., first, by tempting Eve to sin and through her Adam.

Eve, to excuse herself, when God appeared and called Adam and herself, maintained that the serpent had deceived her; but St. Thomas, who follows St. Augustine, attributes her fall and that of Adam to a sinful pride, by which both presumed to arrive, unaided, at the greatest possible knowledge and wisdom and to be like gods. (Gen. iii. 6, 22). This interior pride or presumption to possess omniscience, preceded their exterior act of eating the forbidden fruit and even their deception by the devil. (St. Thos. 2. 2. q. 163, a. 1).

The sin which both Adam and Eve committed by eating the forbidden fruit was a mortal sin, because on account of their superior intelligence and their freedom from the intellectual and sensual appetites, whatever sin they committed was a mortal sin. (St. Thos. 1. 2., q. 89, a. 31). Furthermore, the punishment with which they were threatened, i. e., the death of the body and the spiritual death of the soul, is of itself proof that the command not to eat the forbidden fruit was enjoined under pain of mortal sin.

The personal sin of Adam and Eve, being, in some sense, infinite in malice, deserved eternal punishment like that meted out to the fallen angels: the same hell in company with those wicked spirits was to be their future place of banishment, unless God in His infinite wisdom found the means and determined upon it to reconcile His justice with His mercy and His other divine attributes.

44. What evil befell Adam and Eve on account of their sin?

We have seen that Adam and Eve were created innocent and holy; they were endowed with supernatural life and beauty of soul, which is nothing other than habitual or sanctifying grace. Innocence and holiness

were lost by the personal sin of Adam, for holiness and original innocence cannot exist in the soul together with mortal sin; but besides they lost all for which original justice and sanctifying grace had been bestowed upon the soul, viz., the power to merit by good works a greater participation in the divine beauty and holiness, and they forfeited the glory of heaven, to which they were destined and which was to be the reward of their obedience and sanctity on earth.

But this is not all: divine Justice demands that every sin committed must be expiated by an adequate penalty, and as the sin of Adam and Eve was of an infinite malice, being an offense against the infinite majesty of God, no other punishment than a quasi-infinite punishment, at least in duration, could have been inflicted on them, had not God seen in His infinite wisdom a way to reconcile His justice with His mercy.

Moreover, the preternatural endowments Adam and Eve had received at their creation, on condition that they remained faithful, were irretrievably lost. The curse of God fell upon the whole universe created for man's use and enjoyment, and we see the effects of it in withering droughts and disastrous floods, in destructive storms, in earthquakes, in foul and corrupted air, in pestilences and other infectious diseases and even in the anger of God manifested in thunder and lightning. The earth, the habitation of man was cursed in a special manner: it had been destined to be an immense paradise, a dwelling-place of order and beauty, where the soul would have secured by the most pleasurable occupation all that might contribute to the intellectual and bodily enjoyment of our first parents and of their descendants; but since the fall of Adam and Eve, even after arduous labor and at the sweat of man's brow, the earth has produced mainly thorns and thistles and noxious weeds. "And to Adam He said: . . . because thou hast eaten of the tree . . . . cursed is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth. . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. iii. 17-19).

This specific punishment of hard labor was imposed on Adam and after him on his male descendants, chiefly because, as Scripture says, he had harkened to the voice of his wife (Ibid. iii. 17); for weakness is atoned for by fortitude and patience in hard labor. As for Eve, who first was guilty of pride and the sin of gluttony, her lot, as well as that of her female posterity, is one of sorrows and humiliations. "To the woman also He said: I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions:

in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee." (Gen. iii. 16).

The consequence of the sin of our first parents is manifest also in the corruption of their nature, not however in its essentials; for it is obvious that Adam and Eve could not lose their intelligence and free will, or the power of the soul over the actions of the body, and remain what they were by creation, moral beings responsible to God for their deeds. (Cf. No. 41). If we except what is essential to man as a rational being composed of a spiritual soul united to a material body, which is organized for the soul's communication by the senses with the outside world, everything else was lost to Adam and Eve. Their intellect was obscured and became subject to error; their will was weakened; their memory became unreliable and defective; passions unknown to them before rose up against the legitimate rule of their intellect and will, and concupiscence of the flesh, united to intellectual passions, further impaired their noblest faculties of the intellect and will. Hence a strong inclination to evil rather than to good beset them immediately after their sin, as is clear in the text of Holy Scripture: for after our first parents had eaten of the forbidden fruit, "the eyes of both of them were opened; and when they perceived themselves to be naked, they sewed together fig-leaves, and made themselves aprons." (Gen. iii. 7).

One of the greatest punishments, in consequence of Adam and Eve's sin, is death with its attendant evils, sickness and the infirmities of old age. Adam was threatened with death when God said: "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat. For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death" (Gen. ii. 17), i. e., "thou shalt be subject to death or become mortal," according to the meaning of the Hebrew text. We may include in this death of the body, with which Adam and Eve had both been threatened, the supernatural death of the soul by the loss of sanctifying grace, without which no one can attain life eternal.

45. What evil befell us on account of the disobedience of our first parents?

On account of the disobedience of our first parents, we all share in their sin and punishment, as we should have shared in their happiness, if they had remained faithful.

46. What other effects followed from the sin of our first parents?

Our nature was corrupted by the sin of our first parents, which darkened our understanding, weakened our will and left in us a strong inclination to evil.

47. What is the sin called, which we inherit from our first parents?

The sin, which we inherit from our first parents, is called original sin.

48. Why is this sin called original?

This sin is called original; because it comes down to us from our first parents, and we are brought into the world with its guilt on our soul.

For a clear explanation these questions must be treated together; indeed two important questions embrace them all: what is original sin? what evil consequences follow from it?

Original sin is the sin we inherit from our first parents. It is called original; because it comes to us from the source or origin of the human race, our first parents, Adam and Eve, and because we are brought into the world with its guilt on our souls.

In the sin of Adam we should distinguish the personal sin of Adam and the state of sin in which he was after his personal sin. Adam committed a mortal sin, and therefore he deserved an eternal punishment; this will be shown when there is question of mortal sin. The descendants of Adam could not inherit his personal sin or the eternal punishment in hell due to it; because it was not their deed but the act of Adam. Adam, the head of our race, by his disobedience had voluntarily turned from God and turned to the creature, that is, to the knowledge of good and evil and the forbidden fruit which he esteemed more than God. This state of Adam after his fall consisted, then, mainly in what may be called an habitual **"turning from"** his ultimate destiny, viz., heaven and the sight of God and sanctifying grace that leads thereto, but secondarily it consisted also in an habitual adherence and attachment to the creature, that may be termed **"turning towards."** Both conditions exist in the demons, who, without respite in their despair hate God and re-

main in open revolt against Him coveting equality with His supreme majesty. The second condition the descendants of Adam did not inherit, for that is one of damnation due only to a personal mortal sin. We must now further examine the habitual state of aversion, in which Adam found himself by turning away from God and losing thereby original justice and all other conditional and gratuitous gifts of God received at his creation. Original justice, or holiness and innocence, may be called, in some sense, natural, because it was to pass by generation to the posterity of Adam, if he remained faithful. (St. Thos. I, 2, q. 82, a. 2. c). In that quasi-natural, but gratuitous state, there was a harmony, consisting in this, that the body was in all things subject to the soul, the inferior powers of the soul were subject to reason and reason was subject to God. But this harmony was lost by Adam's disobedience, and he became subject to the inordinate passions in the inferior part of the soul, and concupiscence of the flesh caused the body to war upon the soul.

This unhappy state in which the harmony of original justice was destroyed and man's nature was corrupted, is inherited by the descendants of Adam, the father of the human race; it is a deformity of our nature, a true depravity of the holiness of original justice, which God had intended for the whole human race; it is an aversion from God, our final end, incurring and meriting punishment.

But does it not seem contrary to the justice of God to punish us for a sin committed by another, even if he was the father of our race? It would be, if original justice, sanctifying grace and the harmony in man's nature were due him; but these gifts were superadded to what was essential to man, and as God conferred them upon Adam, and through him upon his posterity, only on condition that Adam would remain faithful, God could in all justice deprive Adam and his descendants of all those conditional endowments.

Hence we conclude that all the preternatural and supernatural endowments which Adam lost by his transgression were also lost to his posterity.

Original sin, in which we are born, does not only consist in the privation of original justice and the loss of all preternatural endowments, nor is it confined to the concupiscence of the flesh, as Luther and Jansenius would have it; these are rather the

consequences of sin than sin itself. We are born sinners, and who says sin, means a moral stain, a deformity, a blemish in the soul, a depravity, which Baptism, or desire of it, or martyrdom, alone can blot out. It may be a minimum of sin, or, as St. Thomas teaches, less grievous than even a venial sin, but it is a sin that would deprive us forever of the beatific vision, until it be washed away. This is evident from the teachings of St. Paul and of the Catholic Church, as clearly shown in the decisions of her general councils and in the condemnation of the heresies that denied the dogma of original sin. Therefore we are called children of wrath when we come into the world, instead of children of God or children of predilection, as we should have been at our birth had Adam never sinned.

What will be the condition of those who die with the sole guilt of original sin on their soul?

This question refers principally to the many children who die without the Baptism of water before they attain the use of reason.

Innocent III holds that the punishment of original sin consists in the privation of the sight of God. The common opinion of the scholastic theologians is that children dying without Baptism shall suffer no pain properly so-called, but will be condemned to an eternal separation from God, and St. Thomas teaches that this separation will cause them no feeling of pain or sorrow or regret, for they cannot regret a happiness nor suffer from its loss, if they have no notion of it and have natuarlly no aptitude for it. Even supposing, that they have a certain knowledge of a supernatural state to which they were destined, they are conscious that they have not lost that destiny through any fault of theirs, and withal they undoubtedly will be free from painful longing for a happiness for which their nature is not fitted; e. g., no one regrets the inability of communicating with his fellow-man without the use of his senses, as the angels can do in their intercourse with each other. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 1, a. 4 to 2).

This opinion of St. Thomas is almost the unanimous opinion of theologians. Besides, St. Thomas and other grave authors do not consider that the separation between God and those children will be a total separation, as they will enjoy a natural happiness here on earth or elsewhere, which will surpass all the joys and pleasures of this world. Consequently all unbaptized children will in the next world participate in some manner in those blessings of God for which they have a natural aptitude and fitness.

49. Does this corruption of our nature remain in us after original sin is forgiven?

This corruption of our nature and other punishments remain in us, after original sin is forgiven.

The catechism here tells us that although original sin is forgiven by Baptism, still the corruption of our nature and other punishments which have come down to us from our first parents, remain in us even after Baptism.

We have seen that all the preternatural gifts which were bestowed upon Adam at his creation, were lost to him and to his descendants through his sin of disobedience, but that all the supernatural gifts also lost through his sin were restored to him and to us through Christ. We shall see later that we are justified by Christ's merit in Baptism, so that all guilt of orginal sin is completely washed away. The punishments that were the consequences of Adam's sin, cannot remain to us as punishments after the last vestige of sin is blotted out; for as we are entirely forgiven, original sin cannot deserve a punishment any longer. If human miseries, sickness and death still fall to our lot, we should not look upon them as the punishments of a sin already forgiven, nor are they useless, but very beneficial, when the ills of this life are borne with patience and received with joy. They lead to a detestation of sin through the knowledge of its nature; they lead the soul towards perfection by mortifying our evil inclinations, our passions and the concupiscence of the flesh; they put us on our guard against the temptations of the future by the knowledge of our weakness and of the corruption of our nature; they make our good works more meritorious, being more arduous; they show us the enormity of sin and the hatred God bears it; by suffering them, we become similar to the suffering Saviour; and, finally, if we have committed any sin, they offer us a means to satisfy for it.

50. Was anyone ever preserved from original sin?

The Blessed Virgin Mary through the merits of her divine Son, was preserved free from the guilt of original sin, and this privilege is called her Immaculate Conception.

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin was proclaimed by Pius IX, of holy memory, on December 8, 1854, and was received with

the greatest and most sincere enthusiasm by the whole Catholic world. This dogma is a truth revealed by God, and the great privilege it affirms has its reason and source in the merits of Mary's Son, Jesus, Our Saviour.

This dogma was believed in the Church before its proclamation, for Pius IX wrote to all the bishops of the Church asking of each one the belief of the Catholics in their respective dioceses regarding that particular doctrine, and the bishops, of one mind with the clergy and their spiritual children, petitioned the Holy Father to declare their belief and conviction a dogma of faith. Whence that unanimity among the bishops, the clergy and the faithful of all the eastern and western churches and even among the Greek schismatics, for all the Greek Churches have, from time immemorial, celebrated the Immaculate Conception of Mary under the name of Conception of St. Ann, Our Lady's Mother?

The Council of Trent in its decree on original sin exempts from that decree "the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God" and enjoins the observance of the Constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV, which were issued to stimulate devotion to the Immaculate Conception.

The Feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin is known to have been celebrated in several dioceses of France in the twelfth century and at Rouen in Normandy in 1072. Long before the latter date, the feast was celebrated among the Greeks, at least as early as the seventh century, and, be it remarked, such feasts of the Church are necessarily based upon the belief of the people and of the clergy. Many testimonies of Greek writers could be easily gathered to prove that, as Pius IX states in the bull "Ineffabilis Deus," this belief in the Immaculate Conception has always existed in the Church.

Reason itself proves the dogma. Would the Father and His Only Begotten Son, Who came into the world to destroy sin, employ an instrument to effect the Incarnation, that had not always been pure and free from all sin and contamination? Would the Son of God consent to be conceived in the womb of the second Eve and call Mother one whose soul had been stained by original sin? Again, what dutiful son, if he could, would not enrich his mother with all endowments and graces? When the Holy Ghost overshadowed the Blessed Virgin, and Christ the Saviour was conceived in her virginal womb, would not He, essential Holiness, have shrunk from being called the Spouse of one, who even for a moment was a child of wrath and under the power of the evil spirit?

To assert now, after the proclamation of the decree, that the Blessed Virgin was not pure and immaculate from the

moment of her Conception would be a most wicked blasphemy against the Blessed Trinity; for it would be dishonoring the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, by belittling the Blessed Virgin below St. John the Baptist and the Prophet Jeremias, who were purified in their mother's womb, and by placing her in estimation beneath all the angels in heaven, in whom the Blessed Trinity never found a stain of sin.

The Church, the interpreter of Holy Scripture and of Tradition has spoken, and when we contemplate with heavenly joy the relationship of the Blessed Virgin with the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity—for she may well be called the adopted Daughter of the Father, the true Mother of the Son and the Spouse of the Holy Ghost—we are forced to exclaim in a transport of enthusiasm: "Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary Most Holy. Blessed be her holy and immaculate Conception." A new title is added to those already given to her of Virgin and Mother of God. She alone can in justice and truth say of herself: "I am the Immaculate Conception."

LESSON THE SIXTH

ON SIN AND ITS SPECIES

51. Is Original Sin the only kind of sin?

Original Sin is not the only kind of sin; there is another kind of sin, which we commit ourselves, called actual sin.

Original sin, as we have seen in the preceding lesson, is the sin we inherit from our first parents, Adam and Eve; and we are born into the world with its guilt and stain upon our soul. This original sin is, by the disorder it has caused in human nature, an incentive to sin: passions in man are constantly in open revolt against reason, and the sensual appetites, or concupiscence of the flesh, clamors for satisfaction. What crimes are not caused by unbridled passions and sensual appetites! What fearful incentives to evil deeds, when passions and sensuality unite in one common subject, as when jealousy and carnal lust overwhelm the profligate! But that is not all. To make our condition more deplorable, original sin has vitiated the essential powers of the soul by obscuring the intellect and weakening the will.

It is well that we should know ourselves and understand the miserable state in which original sin has plunged us, not that we become discouraged, but be disposed to rely less on our own efforts and more on God's mercy and goodness for the practice of virtue and the shunning of sin. Therefore a short explantation of the intellectual and sensual appetites may not be out of place here.

We are composed of body and soul and both have appetites, which are occasions of sin and obstacles to a virtuous and well-regulated life.

The body has five senses and in themselves they are useful and necessary for our intercourse with the outside world. The five senses are: hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch; their tendencies and inclinations are called sensual appetites or the concupiscence of the flesh, and are also sometimes called passions, although the word "passion" is more properly applied to the intellectual appetites. Of all the sensual appetites the sense of touch is the most dangerous, for to it belongs carnal lust, which, more than all other ill-regulated appetites, obscures the intellect and enchains the will.

The intellectual appetites, which reside in the inferior part of the soul, are according to St. Thomas eleven, viz.: love, hatred, desire, aversion, joy, sadness, hope, despair, fear, audacity and anger. (St. Thos. I. 2. q. 23. a. 4). All these passions have their source in love; for hatred is but a detestation of all that is opposed to the possession of what is loved; and from love and hatred, flow, as from their source, all the passions that revolt against reason.

The passions are not necessarily evil; for who does not see that to love God and hope in Him, is really good? The same must be said of aversion, fear or hatred of sin, etc. The sensual appetites and the passions, when controlled by sound reason and a determined will, cannot harm the soul. If reason and will are themselves governed by the theological and moral virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, like the reason and will of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, the passions, if directed into their proper channel, rather facilitate the practice of all virtues.

Original sin has darkened man's intellect and enfeebled his will, and intellectual and sensual appetites have further impaired the soul's faculties, its understanding, reason, judgment, memory, determination and will; but notwithsanding these ravages of Adam's offense, we have preserved our free will and hence our responsibility remains.

What is free will but the power to do or not to do, to choose between two actions and act accordingly? Man is conscious of his freedom to obey God or to transgress His laws, and the whole fabric of social life rests on the certain and universal conviction that man is free. Hence comes the law that restrains the evil-doer, the thief, the murderer and all other criminals. Without free will, man would be placed below the brutes, for his superior intellect would only serve to make him more ferocious. When the so-called Reformers of the sixteenth century broached the new doctrine of the total depravity of man through original sin, thereby destroying free will, their actions belied their doctrine: their hatred and persecution of those opposing their individual views attest it. Calvin had Servetus burned at the stake; because, although a heretic like himself, he held religious views opposed to his own.

In the domain of faith, justification through Christ, the doctrine of grace, of the sacraments and of a future reward for virtue and a punishment for moral evil, confirm the universal belief in man's free will and responsibility. Without free will there is neither right nor wrong, nor virtue, nor vice, nor law, human or divine, nor order, nor God.

Our reason then convinces us that we are free agents and conscience disapproves many of our actions, even independently of the will or command of God, and condemns as evil lying, stealing, impurity, etc. There is a law within our very soul that teaches us what is good and what is evil, and when we transgress that law, deeply engraved in our soul, we know we do wrong, we sin. We are moreover convinced that when we did evil, it was in our power not to do it; for no one compelled us and we cannot put the blame of doing wrong on anyone but ourselves. We are convinced that when we have done evil, it was our own personal act, or in other words, we committed an actual sin.

52. What is actual sin?

Actual sin is any wilfull thought, word, deed or omission contrary to the will of God.

This answer tells us that an action of ours which is forbidden or an omission of what is commanded, is not a sin unless it be wilful or voluntary. Hence an evil thought or representation in our imagination, like a picture placed before our mind, is not a sin unless we take pleasure in it directly, or indirectly by not obliterating the dangerous image. In both these cases the thought

is sinful, whether we consent to the thought or deliberately fail to remove it, as we shall explain presently.

Sinful thoughts often come to people who have led impure lives, or have often during their lives given way to the passion of lust, or have read immoral books, held immoral conversations, etc.; in all such cases memory, that storehouse of the past, of good or evil, the repository of what we have seen or heard, occasionally exhibits its contents to the mind, and the imagination also frequently adds new circumstances. Besides, the devil is not slow in bringing up new food for our imagination, adding thereto the most alluring pictures. But all these representations cannot be sinful unless the intellect adverts to their sinfulness and the will gives its approval or consent. This is true of all passions whether sensual or intellectual. The reformed drinker may feel the cravings of strong drink without desiring or willing to satisfy them. Anger and hatred and other passions may be excited in us by our being addicted to hatred and revenge, or by the suggestion of the evil one, who may represent to our mind occasions of revenge, etc.; but unless those inward thoughts or representations are accompanied by a certain wilful delectation or pleasure or a desire to see them realized, or unless they by their nature may provoke assent, the thought of them is not deliberate or sinful. We added: unless the thought be in itself inducive to provoking assent, for thought can be sinful even if full assent be not given to it, by wilful failure to remove the thought which we know to be dangerous, as the thought of revenge, or any thought suggested by the intellectual and sensual appetites; but this is especially true of all those representations that are opposed to the virtue of chastity. (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 74, a. 6 to 3). Hence we must, as soon as we notice it, promptly remove as far as we can any scene, representation, picture or thought of persons or things that may induce delectation or assent, when they are impure in tendency. The mere thought may or may not be accompanied by an act of our reason, which judges whether any particular thought or imagination or conception is sinful, good or indifferent. Our reason and judgment determines the morality of a thought, for unless one adverts to the evil and gives his consent there can be no sin.

The next step that follows an interior thought is desire, and desire is a sin, if it be a desire of what is forbidden by the law of nature or by the positive law of God. A desire is always wilful, for desire or wish belongs to the will; but the mere representation or image of what is unlawful, if we give no assent to it, belongs to the imagination so long as the intellect takes no notice of it, and in that case we are free from sin.

A desire looks towards something that is not realized:

for the moment it is realized by an outward act, it becomes a word or a deed by the co-operation of the five senses with the interior will. The faculty most prompt to respond to the inward approval of anything evil is the tongue; therefore sins by word are often expressed first; then come the sins by sight, e. g., sinful looks, as by looking at something immodest; also sins by hearing, as when one delights in listening to detraction, to immoral conversation or songs; by the touch, as when giving way to sinful sensations or when inducing them; by the smell, by immoderately delighting in exquisite odors; by the taste, by satisfying its inordinate cravings, finally by gestures or acts of an infinite variety. All these exterior acts of the five senses are called deeds.

With regard to evil thoughts, desires and deeds, let us note that sinful acts suppose the thought and desire of them, and when an act accompanies and completes any evil thought or desire, it is sufficient to mention the deed in sacramental confession. If one has been guilty only of desire, without committing the desired deed, one need not confess the simple thought, for the thought is contained in the desire, as the desire is contained in the act or deed.

If, on the contrary, thoughts, desires and deeds are separate acts and not connected, they constitute specific sins that must be manifested separately: e. g., one has a bad thought at one moment and that thought goes no farther than the delectation and assent to it, the sin is complete. If one ends this thought by thinking of something else or by doing some work that demanded attention, and if the thought comes back again and assent is given again, two sins are committed. But if at another moment one is guilty of an evil thought and desires to execute it or desires that it be realized and goes no farther, the sin is complete in the desire, and this desire alone need be confessed. If, again, one takes pleasure in wicked thought and consents to its desire and this desire is executed by an exterior act, the thought and desire are complete in the deed, and the deed contains them both, although, as we can easily understand, the thought was sinful in itself and so were the desire and the deed; but since the three were logically connected without intermission or repentance, the three form but one sinful moral act, deed or omission.

Our conscience is our witness that we do wrong in two ways: by doing what God forbids and by not doing or by omitting what He commands. This agrees with the positive law of God in the Decalogue, which says: "Honor thy father and thy mother," and "Thou shalt not kill, etc." He that does not honor his father and his mother, is guilty of a sin of omission, and it is a sin because he disobeys God as well as does he that kills

or does any forbidden act. There is this difference between a sin of omission and a sin of commission: that wereas an affirmative commandment does not oblige at all times and in every place, and an omission is sinful only whenever the act or deed is positively commanded and in the manner it is commanded, a negative commandment or a prohibition binds always and everywhere, for doing what is forbidden is a sin and sin is never in any circumstance permitted.

Now, an omission must be also wilful to be a sin, for, if it is impossible to do what is commanded, there can be no guilt. To hear Mass on Sundays is commanded, but if we are prevented from hearing Mass, e. g., if the priest is absent, or if sickness or any other serious cause prevents us, the omission is not wilful.

By mortal sin man totally withdraws from God, his final end, and turning away from God his Supreme Good, adheres to the creature as his felicity and final end. By charity man is united to God and as long as he remains in charity, he prefers his true final end for which he is destined, to all created things; but by mortal sin he values the creature, self or temporal pleasures, more than God and eternal happiness. By mortal sin he abandons God and recedes from Him and seeks the creature, and this is generally expressed by "aversion from God" and "conversion to anything created." To be a mortal sin it is not necessary that God should be despised and hated, it is sufficient that the sinner contemns Him in His holy will and chooses his own will and his own likings and pleasures in preference to the will of God, and so in a manner says within himself: "I will not serve Thee."

A mortal sin can be committed in an instant: a thought or desire, a word or deed of a moment however short, if wilful, is sufficient; for the malice of mortal sin, although increased by the duration of the desire, word or deed, as well as by the intensity of the will and the clearness of one's comprehension, is in its essence independent of these circumstances. For mortal sin three things only are essentially necessary:

1. The grievous evil as such, as it appears to our mind objectively, i. e., as a grievous offense against the law of God;

2. Our notice or knowledge of it commonly expressed by the word "advertence";

3. The will that freely chooses the evil and contemns God's law.

This will be further explained hereafter, but as the enormity of the malice of mortal sin can best be understood by its effects upon the soul, we will, with the catechism, examine them first.

53. How many kinds of actual sin are there?

There are two kinds of actual sin, mortal and venial.

In a subsequent number we will consider the essential difference between a mortal and a venial sin, and their different effects upon the soul as well as the punishment due to each. Here we will explain only why there are two kinds of sin: mortal and venial. This follows: 1st, from the supernatural life of grace which, with all their preternatural gifts, was intended by God to pass from Adam and Eve to their posterity, if they had remained faithful; and which, even now after Adam's fall, through the redemption by Christ, is again offered to Adam's descendants and is intended by the mercy of the Redeemer to reach the whole human race. This is abundantly proved by the teaching of Christ, Who willed that none should be lost and that all should be saved; moreover He has willed to restore us to grace by Baptism, by which we are buried with Christ and rise with Him to the life of grace. 2nd, from the loss of the preternatural graces, by which man's intellect is obscured and his will weakened, but notwithstanding which, man is not totally depraved: he has preserved his free will. If man had been totally depraved like the demons in hell, all his sins would be mortal on account of the hatred of God that necessarily accompanies total depravity. On the other hand, if Adam had not eaten of the forbidden fruit, we should have been born with all the preternatural and supernatural graces with which he was endowed before his fall and we could not have committed a venial sin, for all our sins would have been mortal; and why? Precisely because then all the intellectual appetites and sensual appetites would have been subject to reason and reason to God; and the will not being weakened or trammeled by original sin would have determined by any sin to prefer self or anything created to God.

Since original sin has destroyed the original harmony, man can commit venial sin, because in matters of little importance he does not acquiesce in the sinful act as his ultimate end, and on account of the imperfection of his acts caused by the obscurity of his mind and the weakness of his will, as well as on account of the turbulent passions in his soul and the concupiscence of the flesh, which further diminish the powers of his intellect and

will, his advertence to the evil as well as his consent of the will are often neither perfect nor full. (St. Thos. I. 2., q. 89, a. 3-5).

This will appear still clearer after we have considered the doctrine of the Church on mortal and venial sin.

54. What is mortal sin?

Mortal sin is a grievous offense against the law of God.

This answer can hardly be explained separately from the answer to the question: What is venial sin? and therefore one explanation will include them both.

55. Why is this sin called mortal?

This sin is called mortal, because it deprives us of spiritual life, which is sanctifying grace and brings everlasting death and damnation on the soul.

Yet the soul, as we have seen, is immortal by nature, and God alone can destroy it: not even in hell does it cease to exist; neither does mortal sin cause the natural death of the body, which is effected only by its separation from the soul; for mortal sin is a moral evil and directly effects only the soul. The responsibility of a moral action rests upon the soul, the primary agent, for if the body contributes to an action, it is only as an instrument controlled by the soul. If mortal sin mainly affects the soul and the soul is immortal, how can mortal sin deal a mortal blow to the soul?

1. Let us recollect that the soul has a twofold life: a natural life of which it cannot be deprived, for it will exist forever; and a supernatural life, a wholly free gift of God, which consists in sanctifying grace. Sanctifying grace, the supernatural life, is something divine, causing our soul to become an object of complacency in the eyes of God and His angels, and those who are in possession of it are truly the children of God with the right to inherit a place in His kingdom, there to share His happiness. When the soul is deprived of this supernatural life by mortal sin, is it not proper to say that the soul is dead and that mortal sin kills the soul?

2. Mortal sin not only deprives the soul of its supernatural beauty, but it inflicts upon it a worse than mortal wound: a guilt or deformity incomprehensible to our mind. The loathsomeness of a soul in mortal sin can only partially be represented to our imagination by the horror we have of the demons in their gloomy abode of hell. How repugnant to God and His angels must a soul in mortal sin be? There is but one difference between a soul in mortal sin and the soul of a damned person, and this is that sentence has not been pronounced on the soul of the wicked still on earth.

3. Mortal sin condemns the sinner to an eternal separation from his God, properly called "damnation," and that also carries with it all the sufferings of the preternatural fire, the forced companionship with devils and other damned souls. Is such a state not far more to be feared than natural death and to be dreaded more than annihilation or the return to nothingness?

4. Again, by mortal sin the soul is stripped of the merits of its good works, of its devotions and prayers, of its vigils and fastings, of the graces and merits received in the Sacraments and of all other graces, virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost, who, before mortal sin was committed, dwelt in that soul and made His abode there, as in a sumptuous tabernacle filled with beauty and heavenly splendor. Can you afford all that loss for the gratification sought in a mortal sin?

5. The soul is finally said to be dead by mortal sin, because it cannot by right gain one single favor from heaven. All the good works performed during the time a sinner remains in the state of mortal sin, cannot condignly merit any graces, not even that of conversion. When we say "condign merit" we mean a merit due to the sinner's good works by any claim, including the claim arising from God's promise. It is true that God is a merciful God, and that He is always ready to receive the prodigal son back into His friendship; but for the sinner to return, to acknowledge that he is not worthy

to be called God's son, and to meekly beg for forgiveness, efficacious graces are required; will God grant them?

All the good works performed during the time the sinner is deprived of sanctifying grace, are nevertheless not wholly useless; for, if they are performed with a view to forgiveness, they will probably obtain the grace of conversion.

Do meritorious works revive when, through the forgiveness of mortal sin, grace is again restored to the soul? All the merits of the pious works performed before the sinner fell, are undoubtedly restored; but not so the good deeds performed in a state of mortal sin; for, as said above, no condign merit belongs to them. They are lost and lost forever. Is this not an incentive to urge the unhappy sinner to return promptly to his Father and beg forgiveness?

We should note well what will be said on sin in itself, the circumstances of the act or omission, and the end proposed; for a matter of little importance may become grievous on account of the circumstances and the end in view.

56. How many things are necessary to make a sin mortal?

To make a sin mortal three things are necessary: grievous matter, sufficient reflection and full consent of the will.

The three things required for a mortal sin may be also expressed as follows: grievous matter, full advertence and perfect consent of the will; but in both cases the meaning attached to the three requisites should be the same.

1st. Grievous matter. This regards the object of the intellect and will: it is evident that when the matter is in all respects of little importance, like a slight movement of impatience or anger, stealing a piece of candy, a slight disobedience, quarrels among small children

that are soon settled and as soon forgotten, etc., no matter how full our knowledge of the offense and how perfect our consent may be, they could never constitute a mortal sin or merit the eternal pains of hell, unless one freely consented to a thought, word or deed, he regarded as a mortal sin, although in itself it be only venial.

2nd. Full or perfect advertence on the part of the subject or on the part of him who commits the sin. If by the word "reflection" is understood that the sinner must advert to the fact that he is conscious of the grievous sinfulness of an act or omission, then such a reflection is not required, but the catechism says "sufficient reflection" and by that must be understood what is sufficient, viz., a full knowledge of the malice of the sin or of the act, e. g., if he is aware that it will grievously offend God, or that it will deprive him of the friendship of God, or that it will merit eternal punishment, etc.

We should conclude from this that: a) it is not sufficient to advert to the act or to the omission, but it is necessary to advert to the sinfulness of the deed or omission. One may know that he is eating meat, but if he does not know it is Friday, he commits no sin; one may advert to the fact that he will miss Mass by taking a walk, but if he did not advert to the Sunday obligation, the omission is not sinful.

b) If one adverts to the sinfulness of the action, but if he is convinced that it is only a matter of slight importance and does not advert to the grievously evil consequences of his deed, he sins only venially, although the consequences may be fearful; e. g., boys are playing with fire, made by a parent to burn brush in the yard; if they are cautioned not to stir the fire and still play with the fire they are only disobedient; even if in their wild play, they set fire unawares to dry grass nearby, and thereby destroy one or several out-buildings, they commit only a venial sin, since they did not foresee the consequences of their disobedience.

c) Half consciousness, as often happens when one awakens from sleep, or when one is momentarily absent-minded, makes full advertence to an impious temptation impossible, and hence a semi-conscious act, whether internal or external, does not constitute a mortal sin; but as soon as one becomes fully conscious, one must instantly reject the evil thought or sinful desire or wicked inclination.

d) If one be in doubt whether an act is forbidden or not, or whether an omission is sinful, one is bound to find out, if it can be done without much trouble; for he that can remove the doubt would otherwise sin mortally or venially, according to the gravity of the offense, as long as his conscience remains in doubt; but he may after a serious investigation, if he still remains undecided about the grievousness of his act, make his doubtful conscience certain, e. g., by saying to himself: I cannot find out, whether this action or omission is wrong or not; but a doubtful obligation is no obligation, and hence there is no sin in doing or omitting what is doubtfully sinful. *A fortiori* this reasoning is lawful when there is question of venial sin only.

3rd. Perfect consent of the will. By this is meant that any thought, desire, word, deed or omission must be voluntary to constitute a mortal sin. The will must be free: free from inculpable ignorance, free from coercion, free from overwhelming fear of a great impending evil, and free from irresistible passions; and the reason therefore is that otherwise the deed, although of its nature sinful, would not be a human act, for which intelligence and free will are required in contradistinction to the acts of an irrational creature. (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 1, a. 1). Hence if man's intellect be so impaired by inculpable ignorance, or by such fears or passions that he has not the full knowledge of his sinful act and can be said to have lost the faculty of reasoning; or again, if coercion or irresistible passion takes away his freedom of action, under such a strain of the mind or coercion of the body he is not fully responsible, and his

deeds or omissions are not human acts, and therefore cannot be mortal sins or merit eternal punishment.

From what has so far been explained, we have learned that three things are necessary to constitute a responsible human act: knowledge, advertence and free will or freedom of action. We shall now explain briefly what is understood by inculpable or invincible ignorance, fear, coercion and irresistible passions which excuse one from mortal sin when committing or omitting an act which otherwise would be mortal.

a) Invincible ignorance. We do not speak here of the culpable ignorance of those who failed to learn the principal truths of our holy Religion and the duties of their state of life, the nature and effects of the Sacraments which are to be received, the principal prayers to be recited frequently and the commandments to be kept by everyone in general and by each one in particular; but there is question here only of that inculpable ignorance which excuses from a sinful deed or omission that in itself constitutes a mortal sin.

An invincible ignorance is such that cannot be overcome, or at least is attended with such difficulties that the person is not obliged to inquire further. Many sin through ignorance who do not take the trouble to make inquiries or to ask advice in their doubt about the morality of an act, or, what is worse, do not care to be enlightened as to matters relating to their eternal welfare so that they may sin with less remorse of conscience.

When is ignorance culpable? Several things are required: 1st, that the knowledge of something, considering a person's condition, be obligatory; 2nd, that one advert, in a confused manner at least, to the obligation of making inquiries or of seeking counsel; 3rd, that he has taken no pains to dispel his ignorance after adverting to the obligation; 4th, that it be possible to enlighten himself on the subject of his doubt. How many young people, how many more married persons sin through ignorance, when, in spite of the great opportunities of asking advice in the confessional, and notwithstanding their misgivings and doubts about the moral turpitude of some of their acts, they continue without remorse to commit fearful crimes?

b) Coercion. It is plain that physical force or coercion makes an act involuntary and sinless, if one does not consent and resists as far as he can. Hence the Maccabees, who at the time of the persecutor Antiochus were compelled by mere physical force to eat pork, forbidden by the Mosaic law, did not sin. Hence St. Lucy, whom the torturers threatened to send to an infamous brothel, could truly say: "If thou order my person to be violated in spite of myself, my chastity shall be doubly crowned"; for internal and external resistance with all the strength at her

command, would have added a new luster to her martyrdom and a brighter aureole to her purity.

c) Fear. If a deed or omission is intrinsically or by its very nature bad, fear can never excuse any one from committing such an evil act. Fear of death could not make blasphemy, impurity or even lying a good or indifferent act. Death should be welcomed rather than offend God. But the case is different when there is question of anything commanded or prohibited by a positive law, because a positive law ceases to be binding when great impending danger threatens, except if the omission of one's duty or the act otherwise lawful would be in its nature or circumstances cause irreverence to God or great spiritual harm to our neighbor or to ourselves. If an unnatural parent threatens his child with severe punishment, if he should attend Mass on Sunday, or if he should go to confession, a child may without sin omit Mass, or omit the confession, even if it be an annual confession. A servant may do unnecessary servile work on Sunday if his master threatens to dismiss him for his failure to comply, although in the latter case, as has been stated before, the servant is bound to look for other employment.

d) Irresistible passions or concupiscence. The first movements of the passions, as for instance those of anger, if not deliberate, are not sinful, although a man of violent temper is bound to strive to overcome it; again, if any passion is such that it takes away one's reason and judgment, so that one cannot distinguish between good or evil, such passion would excuse anyone from mortal sin. But very seldom can such an excuse be valid, for even those subject to the greatest passions of anger, hatred, jealousy, etc., some confused notions of the sinfulness of their deeds come before the mind.

As for the concupiscence of the flesh, its first motions, not being deliberate, cannot constitute a mortal sin, and the same must be said if the intellectual faculties be totally destroyed by the violence of the passion. If the sinner is himself the cause of his lust, e. g., by not shunning the proximate occasions, or if he excites the sensual appetites, e. g., the drunkard who takes the first mouthful of strong drink, the greater the concupiscence, the greater the sin. (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 77, a. 6).

The offense of habitual sinners is in itself not always wilful, because it is not always deliberate or voluntary; but an habitual sinner, by frequently sinning, is the cause of the habit he has brought upon himself. Such a habit is in itself sinful in its cause; still blasphemy, cursing, swearing, etc., are often free from sin in a man who has acquired the habit of it, provided he tries by all means in his power to break loose from it. Then the irreverences to God contained in his profanities are like the involuntary motions of concupiscence, devoid of all responsibility before God.

57. What is venial sin?

Venial sin is a slight offense against the law of God in matters of less importance, or in matters of great importance it is an offense committed without sufficient reflection or full consent of the will.

The malice of the venial sin is better understood by comparing it with that of mortal sin. By mortal sin man withdraws entirely from God (aversion) and attaches himself to a creature as his ultimate end (conversion), i. e., by abandoning the Creator for the creature and by exchanging eternal happiness for the satisfaction of a moment. From this conversion naturally follows that man cannot by his own efforts break loose from the fetters he forged for himself; he is a slave of his passions and of the devil, and only a miracle of grace can break his chains to give him freedom to return to God. By venial sin man only withdraws further from God, but not totally, and he remains in charity and therefore the fault is reparable; he can easily break through the obstacles which only retard his union with God. (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 72, a. 5). This explains the reason why the sin is called "venial," a word derived from the Latin word "venia," i. e., pardon and hence "venial" means pardonable or reparable.

The principal effects produced on the soul by venial sin is that it lessens the supernatural life of the soul, which is sanctifying grace; whilst mortal sin deprives the soul of all supernatural life; yea, it kills the soul's supernatural life and therefore it well deserves its name.

We have learned that three things are necessary to make a sin mortal: grievous matter, full advertence, and perfect consent of the will; if any of these three conditions is lacking, the sin is venial. It behooves us now to determine, if possible, what constitutes grievous matter or matter of great importance, and what is meant by matter of less importance.

Considered objectively, sins are known to us by their different species: e. g., blasphemy, perjury, theft, calumny, hatred, impurity, etc., are all different species of sin; but as to their malice they may be divided into three classes: a) some species are of their very nature mortal; b) some species may be mortal or venial, and c) some species of sin are by nature venial only.

a) Sins against faith by failing to believe all that

God has taught, false worship, sins of blasphemy, cursing, and sins of impurity, viz.: fornication, adultery, incest and other unnamable sins, are by their nature always mortal. These sins can become venial only through a want of full advertence or of a perfect consent of the will.

b) This class of sins comprises all the species of sins, which admit of a smallness of matter; e. g., stealing is mortal, if it grievously injures our neighbor. Stealing five dollars and over is always mortal, if taken from a stranger or one not nearly related; but to steal one dollar or less is only a venial sin, unless it be taken from a very poor man. Likewise detraction is, generally speaking, a mortal sin; but to say of another that he or she is proud, careless, loves good cheer or is too worldly, does not constitute a mortal sin in itself, as it does not considerably hurt the reputation of an ordinary person.

c) The sins that are in themselves or in their nature venial only are those that, ordinarily speaking, do not offend our Maker grievously, e. g.: sins of impatience, telling untruths, vainglory, distractions in prayers or in church, curiosity, a craving for exquisite and palatable food, an inclination for ease and comfort, a fondness for enjoyment and honorable pleasure, etc.

Is there any standard by which we can judge what sins are to be classed as mortal or venial?

We should be guided in our judgment by Holy Scripture, by Tradition, the decisions of holy Church and by the unanimous teaching of the Fathers of the Church and of Catholic Theologians.

a) We must consider as mortal those sins that are called in Holy Scripture abominable, detestable, hateful to God; when it is said that they cry to heaven for vengeance or that those that are guilty of them shall not possess the kingdom of heaven; if a woe or curse accompanies the denunciation of a sin, etc.

On the contrary, if sins are compared to straw, hay, etc., or are said to be easily condoned, they should be considered venial.

b) Sins are mortal that are thus regarded in the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils and of the See of Rome. The teachings of the Fathers of the Church acquaint us with the traditions

of the Church handed down from Apostolic times, but we should not forget that on account of the severity of discipline in the early Church, sometimes slight offenses were subjected to rigorous punishments.

c) The unanimous opinion of theologians should, in the absence of clear decisions by the Church, have great weight in determining our judgment of the gravity of a certain class of sins.

Circumstances and end of a deed or omission.

With the catechism we have now considered sinful deeds or omissions subjectively, i. e., in their relation to our intellect or will, and also objectively in themselves; now we must inquire if there are other factors which determine the morality of an action.

First of all, we are taught that deeds or omissions considered in themselves may be good, bad or indifferent; they are good if they conform to the natural law, the positive law of God and sound reason; they are bad if they are opposed to them; and if neither, they are indifferent, i. e., neither good nor bad. In the positive law of God we include the laws of the Church, for God speaks to us through His Church. Thus the giving of alms and the selling of all we possess to give it to the poor, are good deeds; the first because God enjoins it, and the second because God counsels it. Theft is bad, because God forbids it; and walking, playing, reading, etc., are indifferent acts, because they are neither commanded nor counselled nor forbidden.

Whether in the concrete, i. e., considering all the circumstances and the end in view, there can be strictly indifferent acts among Christians, is a disputed question. Every sincere Christian ought in all he does to follow the teaching of the Apostle: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all to the Glory of God." (1 Cor. x. 31).

The object alone does not determine the morality of an act: there are two other factors to be considered, viz., the circumstances and the end.

1. Thus, a good action is doubly good, if the doer's intention be good, e. g., to assist the needy with the view of reclaiming them from their evil ways; an indif-

ferent action becomes good through a good intention, and both good and indifferent actions become bad through evil intentions, e. g., to give money to a poor girl to lure her from the path of virtue; to study the property of poisons with a view to injuring someone.

2. Circumstances may also alter the morality of a good or indifferent action, e. g., fasting becomes sinful, if one injures his health thereby, and to play is evil, if one thereby neglects his duty. But an action essentially evil, such as blasphemy, a lie, an impure act, is always bad, no matter what the circumstances or end may be, for the end never justifies the means, if these are intrinsically bad. A good end or circumstance, however, may be of such weight that it justifies means which are bad only because of a positive law which commands or forbids them; e. g., it is allowed to desecrate the Sabbath by servile work, if our neighbor's good or our own requires it. In such a case, necessity dispenses with the law, or the law is not applicable.

I. End. When speaking of the morality of an act or omission, we understand by the end in a strict sense, (a) the end in view or the intention which moves one to act or not to act,—it is sometimes called the object in view,—or (b) we may also understand thereby the natural consequences of a deed or of an omission, which although not directly intended, is nevertheless voluntary, if it be foreseen. In this sense it is rather a circumstance than an end. A consequence or effect of an act is one of the ends in view, if directly intended.

Besides what has been said regarding the end as a principle of morality we add:

1. An act becomes totally bad, if the end proposed constitutes a mortal sin.

2. Likewise, if the sole end in view is in itself only a slight offense, e. g., the giving of alms solely to gain praise, a good or an indifferent act becomes venially evil.

3. A good deed becomes partially bad only, if the

end is partly good and partly bad; e. g., to give alms for the sake of both compassion and vain glory.

4. Slight imperfections which accompany the execution of a good deed diminish the merit of it; e. g., assisting at public devotion with casual distractions.

But what, if from a good or indifferent act there are two effects, one bad and the other good?

a) Ordinarily speaking, when there is no necessity or obligation to act, if the good effect or consequence exceeds or at least equals the bad effect, it is permissible; for there are few good actions of man which may not have an evil effect. But charity may sometimes oblige one to forego the pleasure of an act that might injure one's neighbor; e. g., many amusements are forbidden to priests and religious for fear of scandal.

This is more clearly set forth in the following proposition generally accepted as an axiom: it it permissible to do a good or an indifferent act from which two effects directly follow, one good and the other bad, provided the good at least equals the bad effect, and provided the good effect alone be intended. Hence it is allowed to defend one's life against an unjust aggressor, even if the death of the latter is caused thereby.

II. Circumstances. A circumstance, as a determining principle of morality, is something added to an act or an omission, which of its nature may be good, bad or indifferent.

a) Some circumstances leave a sin in its own species, but aggravate or diminish the guilt thereof. If the increase or diminution of the guilt is but slight, no mention of the circumstance is required in confession; but it is necessary to mention it, if the increase or diminution be important; e. g., hatred that continues for several days.

b) Circumstances often change the species of the sin; e. g., theft of a sacred vessel is sacrilege; and the sale or purchase of it, if sold for more than its intrinsic value, on account of the blessing or consecration attached to it, is simony as well as sacrilege.

c) Some circumstances make a venial sin mortal and *vice versa*; e. g., the theft of a mechanic's tool which in itself is worth but a trifle, may keep him from his work

a whole day. Inculpable ignorance or lack of advertence often makes a mortal sin venial or no sin at all.

The circumstances that determine the morality of an act or omission, may be reduced to these seven: viz., who, where, by what, why, how, when. (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 7, a. 3).

"Who" refers to the person, his condition, his position, etc. Is he a single man or is he married; is he a religious, a relative, one in authority—all questions that may determine the morality of an act; "What" refers to the object not in itself, but to the quality or quantity of the object, such as the amount, the value, its being blessed, etc. "Where" relates to the place: was it in public, in a church? For to spill human blood wilfully in a church is a sacrilege. "By what" refers to the means employed; e. g., to kill a person gradually or by crucifixion is a greater sin than to shoot him dead. "Why" refers to the secondary ends in view or circumstances that accompany the primary end; e. g., the primary end of giving alms is to relieve the wants of the needy, but to seek praise therefrom is a secondary end which would diminish the merit of the deed. "How" refers to the manner; e. g., to steal by violence is robbery, and the forcible violation of a woman is rape. "When," or time, is a well known circumstance affecting many laws, e. g., Fridays, Sundays, holy days of obligation, Easter-time, etc.

58. Which are the effects of venial sin?

The effects of venial sin are the lessening of the love of God in our heart, the making us less worthy of His help, and the weakening of the power to resist mortal sin.

The principal effect of venial sin, as remarked before, is that it weakens the soul's supernatural life, or sanctifying grace, and from that we deduce all the other effects of venial sin.

The Catechism gives three principal effects of venial sin in the soul. 1. Venial sin lessens the love of God in our hearts. Charity or the love of God is produced by habitual or sanctifying grace, and hence whatever lessens sanctifying grace in our souls lessens the love of God in our heart. Consequently venial sin likewise deprives the soul of a portion of its supernatural beauty and comeliness; so that God finds less complacency in the soul guilty of deliberate venial sin, and hence such

a soul can not expect abundant grace to avoid mortal sin, much less to advance in spiritual life. 2. Venial sin makes us less worthy of God's help. Venial sins, when wilful or deliberate, offend God, although slightly; and since one good action draws down new graces from God, frequent wilful offenses diminish the flow of graces. Above all, God demands from His servants a grateful heart, as we learn from our Saviour's complaint, when only one of the ten lepers He had cured came back to give thanks. He that deliberately commits venial sin repays the munificence of his heavenly Father with ingratitude. Is it not just and reasonable that God Who loves all His children, loves with a most tender love and affection all those who appreciate His gifts and strive to make His gifts fructify, and thereby merit new graces? 3. Venial sins weaken the power to resist mortal sins. This is but a natural consequence of venial sin, which lessens the supernatural life or sanctifying grace in the soul. When we truly love God, we hate what God hates and love what He loves; yea, we despise all things that do not lead to God, and we have the greatest horror of the least defect that may displease Him. When that love has been weakened by unforgiven venial sins, whence can we expect the strength to avoid mortal sin, surrounded as we are by so many temptations from within and without? Surely the inevitable consequence of a weakened supernatural life is mortal sin, the death of the soul.

Holy Scripture teaches us the same truth: "He that contemneth small things shall fall little by little" (Eccli. xix. 1), and "He that is unjust in that which is little is unjust also in that which is greater" (Luke xvi. 10); i. e., he that is unjust in little things will soon be guilty of greater injustice.

4. We might add that venial sin deserves a terrible punishment and what punishment? Evidently a punishment proportionate to its guilt. But we know that venial sin is, after mortal sin, the greatest evil in the world, and

therefore, if God sends us punishments for venial sins, such as the loss of health, the loss of fortune, the loss of those we love, etc., all these punishments would not be equal to the evil of one wilful venial sin. Therefore we should not wonder when God punished with death even apparently venial sins, as when Oza touched the ark, (2 Kings, vi. 6) and Ananias and Saphira lied to St. Peter (Acts v. 1, sq.).

After this life the punishment of an unforgiven venial sin is the fire of Purgatory and the separation from God until full satisfaction is made.

Remark. If anyone wishes to shun mortal sin, he must necessarily avoid deliberate venial sin, and likewise shun the proximate occasions thereto. (See No. 207). By this is meant that if anyone knows that when he was in company with certain persons or frequented certain places or read certain books or assisted at certain entertainments, etc., he nearly always committed venial sins, because such persons, places, occupations or things, generally were a proximate occasion of sin to him, he should avoid such occasions or if it be too difficult to avoid them, he should take precaution to make these occasions remote or less dangerous.

59. Which are the chief sources of sin?

The chief sources of sin are seven: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth, and they are commonly called capital sins.

There are many sources of sin, and all sins have not necessarily their sole source in the seven capital sins. The sources of sin are not always sins, e. g., our passions are sources of sin, but a passion is not always sinful, as we have already had occasion to remark; but there is here question of sources of sins which are sins in themselves and are often the cause of many other sins.

Capital sins are so called because, being sins, they are most frequently causes or sources of many other sins, and therefore many moralists call the sins, which have their source in the capital sins, the daughters thereof.

Capital sins are not necessarily the most grievous sins, for some are in themselves only venial sins, as will clearly appear from the explanation.

It is proper now to explain how all sins find their source and beginning in the seven capital sins, and at

the same time to show that he who is free from these sins, and practices the virtues opposed to them, places the most effective barrier against all the sins that are usually committed, whether mortal or venial.

1. Pride. This capital sin consists in an inordinate self-esteem or in esteeming ourselves above what we are or above what we have. This pride may regard the soul, the body or worldly goods, such as great learning, perspicacity, health of the body, beauty, riches, rank, occupation, etc. The knowledge of these good and valuable endowments or possessions does not constitute sin, which lies in over-valuing ourselves on their account, as if these advantages belonged to us by right, and as if they were not received from God, Who alone deserves the fullest measure of esteem, honor and glory.

He that esteems himself on account of what he is or what he has craves likewise the esteem of others; but one is already guilty of pride when being conscious of his good qualities of soul, or of body, or of the possession of his worldly goods, he finds complacency in them and esteems them as his own without referring them to the Giver of all that is good. God alone may, and must, infinitely esteem Himself; for as He knows Himself, so He must esteem and love Himself. God alone can say: "Who hath given Me before that I should repay him? All things that are under heaven are Mine." (Job. xli. 2). Therefore in the midst of prosperity when honors overwhelm us, let us exclaim with the Psalmist: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to Thy name give glory." (Ps. cxiii. 1).

One is guilty of pride, then, when he attributes his good qualities to himself; when he exagerates them, although he admits that what he is or has are gifts from his Maker; when without exaggerating his qualities of soul and body and his good fortune, he ascribes them solely to his own merits; when he wishes to attract the favorable opinion of others by living above his means in dress, sumptuous dwellings and repasts, etc.; when he covets positions of which he is not worthy or is incapable of filling; and also when he despises others who are less gifted, or are poor, friendless, or helpless through sickness or misfortune; for in all these cases

man overvalues himself or counts for nothing God's designs in the distribution of His favors. God esteems only those that make good use of His gifts, as we learn from the parable of the talents. (Mat. xxv. 15-30).

Since "the beginning of the pride of man, is to fall off from God" (Eccli. x. 14), we can easily infer that "Pride is the beginning of all sins" (Ib. 15); for pride, considered as a specific sin is an inordinate esteem of one's own excellence and therefore is an aversion from God, a contempt of the Sovereign Good, of the laws and will of his Maker and of his ultimate end. In the very aversion from God is found the beginning of all evil. (Cfr. St. Thos. I. 2, q. 84, a. 2). This does not mean that all sins necessarily come from pride, but pride opens the door to all sin by taking away the fear and love of God. On the other hand, through humility the humble man subjects himself to the laws of God, of His Church and of all lawful authority.

The first outcome of pride is vainglory, by which the proud seek an outward manifestation of their excellence and desire honors and glory from others beyond those they are entitled to. This opens the door to injustice, to envy, hatred, etc., even to the basest crimes.

Pride is of its nature a mortal sin when perfect, i. e., when it is accompanied with aversion from God; but when imperfect, i. e., when it lacks full deliberation or consent and consists only in an excess of complacency in one's excellence without contempt of God or injury to one's neighbor, it is only a venial sin.

The principal remedies against pride are a) the consideration of our personal infirmities of soul and of body and the transitoriness of all that exists here below; b) the consideration of the greatness of God in whose presence we are nothing; c) frequent meditation on how contemptible all the goods of this world are when compared with the celestial joys that will never end; d) the study of the love of humility in our Saviour, who taught His Apostles that "God resisteth the proud, but to the humble He giveth grace." (1 Pet. v. 5).

2. Covetousness, cupidity or avarice, is an inordinate desire to acquire temporal goods, or to augment them, and as such it is a specific sin and the root of all other sins. As the roots of a tree give food to the trunk, branches and leaves, so covetousness furnishes the means to perpetrate all other sins. "The desire of money is the root of all evils." (1 Tim. vi. 10). As

covetousness is the natural daughter of pride, it, in its turn, supplies material and food for its parent as well as for every other vice. Besides, there is in fallen man a natural inclination towards the acquisition of worldly goods; for the end proposed in the acquisition of them is to obtain a certain excellence and a particular perfection, and hence we clearly see why pride is called the beginning and covetousness the root of all evil. All sins originate in pride but covetousness sustains and feeds them. (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 84, a. 1, 2). Hence Scripture tells us that "all things obey money" (Eccle. x. 19).

The natural daughters of covetousness are: hardness of heart towards the needy, oppression of the weak, fraud, theft, calumny, murder, etc.

Its principal remedy lies in frequent meditation on the truths of the Gospel: "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul?" (Mark. viii. 36). "No man can serve two masters . . . You cannot serve God and mammon. . . . Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. vi. 24-33). "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xix. 24).

By preferring poverty to riches, Jesus has also taught the danger lurking in the possession of wealth.

Although to covet wealth inordinately is in itself but a venial sin, and may be devoid of sin if the intention is laudable, still the craving for riches often leads to injustice towards our follow-men and to a forgetfulness of our duty towards God.

3. Lust. Lust is an inordinate desire of unchaste carnal pleasure. The different sins of the vice or the passion of lust will be explained when we treat of the sixth Commandment; here lust is considered in so far as it is a capital sin or the source of many sins. Lust as such admits of no smallness of matter outside the state of matrimony, and therefore all impure sins, except among the married, are mortal sins; for the nature of lust is such that the least deliberate and voluntary unchaste pleasure, directly intended, is sure to involve the committing of grievous sin.

The vice of lust disorders the superior faculties of the soul, intellect and will. There are four things to be considered in our soul's intellectual or reasoning powers, viz., the simple intellect that adverts to the ends as good or bad, council or deliberation about the means, judgment about the choice of them, and lastly determination. Lust disturbs these four acts, and hence lust begets blindness of the intellect, precipitation or want of deliberation, error in judgment and inconstancy in carrying out what has been determined upon.

Lust also weakens the will and subjects it to two inordinate affections, viz., self-love and as a consequence hatred of God, and excessive love of the present life which leads to the contempt of the future life. (Cf. St. Thos. 2. 2., q. 103, a. 5. c).

The remedies against the sins of lust are: a) humble and frequent prayer, for without the grace of God, we the descendants of Adam cannot long remain continent and chaste, as we learn from the Book of Wisdom (viii. 21); b) temperance and sobriety, for much wine is as fuel to the passion of lust; c) the keeping of constant watch over our senses, especially those of sight, of hearing and of touch; d) modesty in words, manners and dress; e) the avoiding of proximate occasions and as far as possible of all occasions of lust, for victory lies in flight; f) the shunning of all familiarity with persons of the other sex; g) constant occupation; h) mortifications of the flesh; i) frequent reception of the sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist; j) meditation on our last end: death, judgment, heaven and hell: "In all thy works remember thy last end and thou shalt never sin" (Eccli. vii. 40).

4. Anger. Anger is a sin that consists in an inordinate desire to avenge ourselves for real or imaginary injury. It must be distinguished from hatred and envy. By hatred we wish to do harm to our neighbor, because we wish him evil; through envy we are sad over our neighbor's welfare and consider his welfare our misfortune. But in anger we wish him, in an inordinate manner, evil as a punishment we consider due to his misdeeds.

As to the object of our anger, we may seek revenge on rational or irrational creatures, even on ourselves. Anger may also be considered in its circumstances, as when one is more angry than is befitting or is just. Hence, to seek revenge on irrational creatures is only a venial sin, unless it be accompanied by blasphemy and cursing, or serious harm be done to ourselves or to others. But to avenge more than is proper any harm done us, or to wish otheres an excess of punishment,

especially if it be done through hatred, is generally a mortal sin; although it may become venial through lack of deliberation, as in children, as it also admits of smallness of matter, as when parents or teachers in anger punish their wayward children or pupils slightly more than they deserve.

Anger leads to many sins against the virtue of charity towards our neighbor, such as hatred, enmities, quarrels, cursing, contumely, calumny, blasphemy, strifes, the infliction of bodily harm and even murder.

The remedy for anger is found in a serious meditation on the teachings and example of Christ, Who taught us to learn of Him "to be meek and humble of heart," Who prayed for those that crucified Him and "Who when He was reviled, did not revile; when He suffered, He threatened not; but delivered Himself to him that judged Him unjustly." (1 Pet. ii. 23).

5. Gluttony. Gluttony is an inordinate desire or immoderate use of food and drink. The desire and use of food and drink is inordinate when eating and drinking are indulged in solely for the satisfaction and pleasure they procure for the palate. Appetite and taste were given us by our Maker to stimulate our desire for the food and drink necessary for the growth and preservation of the individual, and therefore there is nothing sinful in appetite and pleasurable taste; but to eat and drink solely for the pleasure it affords is a perversion of nature and right order.

We are tempted by gluttony in five different ways, says St. Gregory: By anticipating the time of the repast, by desiring or demanding exquisite viands, by seeking food delicately prepared; or, if one be satisfied to wait for the time of the repast and content himself with the kind of food placed before him, by requiring a quantity of food or drink that exceeds all moderation; and finally by coveting the sole pleasure which food and drink bring to the taste. The last is the coarsest of all the desires engendered by gluttony.

The consequences of excess in eating and drinking are spiritual blindness, dissipation and inordinate hilarity, intemperance in speech, indecency in manners, and finally impurity. (St. Thos. 2. 2., q. 148, a. 6).

Although all the masters of spiritual life inveigh with much zeal against intemperance, gluttony is in itself only a venial sin, even if food and drink are partaken of for the sole pleasure they bring to the taste; but accidentally gluttony may become mortal, if one neglects thereby some grave duty, as do those who by

excess in eating or drinking waste valuable time, or fail to provide for their families, or ruin their health.

The remedies against gluttony are: moderate fasts and the consideration of the harm done to the soul and body by excess in eating and drinking, such as the shortening of one's life and the sicknesses that often result therefrom, and finally the meditation on the fatal consequences caused to the soul, as enumerated above. Nothing is oftener inculcated in Holy Writ than the necessity of sobriety.

Drunkenness is not properly gluttony but a specific sin; for, when complete, it takes away the use of reason and renders man equal to the brute. Such drunkenness is always a mortal sin, provided it be foreseen, deliberate and wilful. The same is to be said of those who use drugs, or smoke opium, which also deprives man of the use of reason. Drunkenness is among the sins which exclude from the kingdom of heaven. (Gal. v. 21).

6. Envy. Envy as already explained is sadness because of the good fortune of our neighbor, in so far as it detracts from our own welfare or excellence. Hence it is not envy to feel sad over the well-being of our neighbor, if the motive is his unworthiness, or because his good fortune is cause of another's misfortune. If the motive of our sadness is just, e. g., when we feel sad because a rich man has succeeded in cornering the market in foodstuffs to the detriment of the community at large, it is indignation and is free from all guilt; again, if several compete for a prize and the unsuccessful ones feel aggrieved on account of the success of the winner, it is not envy but laudable emulation. Although it is not strictly speaking envy to feel satisfaction on account of the misfortune of another, because in our judgment it redounds to our good, it is nevertheless a sin akin to envy and springs directly from it.

The consequences or daughters of envy are: hatred, intriguing in word or deed, detraction, joy on account of another's misfortune and sadness because of his prosperity. (St. Thos. 2. 2, q. 36, a. 4 to 4). Envy is in general a mortal sin, as it is opposed to the virtue of charity by which we are in duty bound to love our neighbor as ourselves; but it is often only a venial sin by reason of the want of reflection or full consent of the

will, and also by reason of the smallness or insignificance of the matter involved.

The principal remedies against envy are: a serious consideration of the enormity of the sin and of its sad consequences. Through it we are in league with the evil one and become his imitators and followers, according to the words of Scripture: "By the envy of the devil, death came into the world; and they follow him that are of his side." (Wis. ii. 24, 25). Christ says: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one for another." (John xiii. 35). "Charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not" (1 Cor. xiii. 4). Let the envious also bear in mind that they bring contempt on their own head and merit only the pity of their fellow-men without doing injury to those whose prosperity they envy.

7. Sloth. Sloth, as a capital sin, must be distinguished from the physical sloth or sluggishness, which if not the result of sickness, is pure laziness or wilful idleness. Sloth, as here understood, is a spiritual ailment, a vice by which one neglects the means of salvation or is loath to fight against the enemies of his salvation on account of the labor involved, and therefore concerns himself but little about the salvation of his soul.

St. Thomas, after St. Gregory, mentions the following consequences or this vice: 1. malice, or hatred of all things spiritual; 2. disgust of spiritual exercises; 3. pusillanimity or fear of any difficult undertaking tending to spiritual progress; 4. despair of salvation; 5. sluggishness in complying with the Commandments of God and of the Church; and 6. wilful distractions in devotions and other spiritual exercises. (Cfr. St. Thos. 2. 2. q. 35, a. 4, to 2).

Sloth is only a venial sin when it consists in a certain torpor or ennui in the exercise of one's Christian duties, as in prayer, during the Holy Sacrifice, during sermons, etc.; but when it is such that it becomes hatred of spiritual things, either as imposed by God or established for our eternal welfare, because of the annoyance they bring with them, it is a mortal sin. Likewise it is a mortal sin, not only if one neglects any duty imposed upon him under pain of mortal sin, but also if one feels such a disgust for his obligations that he would not comply with them, if his parents or teachers would not punish him for his neglect.

The remedies against sloth are: 1. the serious consideration of the evil effects to which sloth often leads; 2. the vivid representation to our mind of the night near at hand, of which the

Saviour speaks when He says: "The night cometh, when no man can work" (John ix. 4); 3. to weigh well in the balance the value of time with regard to eternity and the shortness of the sufferings here below, compared with the eternal glory that awaits us hereafter; 4. we should not lose sight of the condemnation which tepidity and sloth, so nearly related, drew from our Lord: "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of My mouth" (Ap. iii. 16); 5. fervent prayer and confidence in God Who will not abandon those who trust in Him, for He beckons us on and encourages us with the alluring promise: "To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with Me in My throne." (Ib. 21).

LESSON THE SEVENTH

ON THE INCARNATION AND THE REDEMPTION

60. Did God abandon man after he fell into sin?

God did not abandon man after he fell into sin, but promised him a Redeemer, Who was to satisfy for his sin and reopen to him the gates of heaven.

The sin of Adam and Eve by eating the forbidden fruit was a grievous or mortal sin, and deserved eternal punishment. All their descendants have inherited, not all their guilt, it is true, but the state of aversion from God, which, without some satisfaction, or at least condonement from the part of God, would have made the friendship between God and man impossible for all times; for man, a finite creature, could not redeem himself. Adam and Eve, by following the suggestion of the evil one, became his slaves and that slavery passed to all their posterity; hence we are all born in the slavery of Satan; we all sinned in Adam for the infection of sin contaminated human nature. Two things were then required to redeem Adam and his posterity: deliverance from slavery and the payment of the ransom or price of the reconciliation of our race with God.

Who could deliver man from slavery? Satan is impotent, and he is himself confirmed in vice, and rather would tighten our fetters than loosen them. Man is powerless: he is not able to break the chains which his own hands have forged, and in

his state of estrangement or alienation from his Maker, which is rightly termed aversion, he could gain no merit to satisfy God's justice by repairing the insult done to the Supreme Majesty, nor could he pay the ransom for his deliverance from captivity.

God could have abandoned man and left him to his fate, as he abandoned the fallen angels; and in that case Adam would have been condemned to spend a most miserable life on earth, a life of labor and sufferings without a ray of hope for the future, and at his death, he would have been doomed to the companionship of devils and to a share in their torments for an endless eternity. The same fate awaited the large majority of his descendants, for, with the exception of the demented and of children, who would have died before attaining the use of reason, few would have resisted their depraved intellectual and sensual appetites; and no one could have attained eternal happiness in heaven, because this happiness was promised to Adam and his descendants only on condition that the parents of the human race remained faithful to God.

God could in His goodness and mercy have condoned the sin of Adam and restored to him all the privileges of his original justice and all the endowments of soul and body he possessed before his fall; but how could the wisdom of God reconcile such mercy with His justice? Who could satisfy the outraged majesty of God? Who would pay the debt incurred through Adam's sin? There should be, it seems, some compensation for the guilt incurred by him and a ransom paid for his deliverance from Satan's bondage.

God in His wisdom did require an adequate satisfaction and a ransom of infinite value, because the sin of Adam was one of infinite malice, the insult being offered by a rational being to an infinite God, to Whom he owed his existence. In that manner mercy and justice kissed each other: justice triumphed by offering full satisfaction, mercy by pardoning, and wisdom by bringing together mercy and justice with the kiss of peace and reconciliation. The design of God to furnish man with the means to satisfy for his sin was made known in the promise of the Redeemer. This promise was given to Adam immediately after his fall, as might be supposed, if God determined to redeem man. Otherwise Adam and his posterity would have been driven to despair of

their salvation, as was sure to happen, if no hope of pardon were held out to them.

To the serpent who had deceived and seduced Eve, God said: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." (Gen. iii. 15). Evidently this is said in a metaphorical sense to the serpent which was no other than Satan, as we have seen. (Ap. xii. 9). What enmities could exist between Satan and the woman and her seed, except envy and hatred on the part of Satan and the destruction of Satan's power by the seed of the woman or by the woman through her seed, for the Hebrew text admits of either meaning? The destruction of Satan's power is well expressed by the crushing of the serpent's head. A Redeemer, the Seed of the woman, Who alone could overcome Satan, Eve's seducer, was thus duly announced. The Church with good reason sees in the text the power of the Virgin Mary who through her Son would redeem the world held in slavery for more than four thousand years. Hence the Immaculate Virgin is represented in religious paintings as crushing with her heel the serpent's head.

St. Chrysostom and others after him explain the text in question by opposing Christ to Adam, the Blessed Virgin to Eve, and Gabriel to the serpent: death came through Adam and life through Christ; the serpent seduced Eve, and the Virgin Mary assented to Gabriel's announcement; the seduction of Eve brought death upon us, whereas the consent of Mary brought a Redeemer upon earth.

This promise of a Redeemer was often renewed: viz., to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 18), through a prophetic vision of Jacob on his death bed (Gen. xlix. 10), through Moses (Deut. xviii. 18), and still more frequently and more clearly through the prophets of a later day. (Cfr. "Revelation" in Appendix).

61. Who is the Redeemer?

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of mankind.

The fundamental doctrine that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of mankind, is taught and believed by nearly all the members of the different Christian religions. A Redeemer was necessary and a Redeemer was promised; these two truths were explained in the last number. But do these promises of a Redeemer made by God prove that Jesus of Nazareth, Who lived in Judea nineteen

hundred years ago, Who preached a new Gospel, Who wrought so many miracles to convince His hearers of His mission from Heaven, Who called Himself the Son of God, Who was crucified and rose to life on the third day after His death, is clearly the Redeemer or the Messiah?

1. The promise of a Redeemer made by God after Adam's fall, as well as the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, point to a Redeemer to come but they do not disclose the identity of the Redeemer.

2. The prophecy of Jacob (Gen. xlix. 10) already limits the time of the Messiah's or Redeemer's coming: viz., before the scepter or authority would pass from the house of Juda; hence before Judea, Idumea and Samaria were reduced to a Roman province, and were administered by a procurator about the year six of the Christian era.

3. When Joseph and Mary returned with the child Jesus from Egypt, Herod, who had ordered the massacre of the Innocents, had died, and Archelaus reigned in his stead. (Matt. ii. 22). Judea and Samaria became a Roman province only after Archelaus had been banished to Gaul.

4. Moses (Deut. xviii. 15, 18) predicts the coming of a prophet like unto himself, i. e., a teacher and law-giver like himself, which description can apply only to Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour, for none of the other prophets proclaimed a new law. St. John (i. 45) corroborated by his testimony the same conclusion, for he relates that Philip, afterwards an Apostle, finding Nathaniel said to him: "We have found Him of Whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus the Son of Joseph of Nazareth."

5. David in many of his psalms describes graphically and with pathos many striking parts of the Saviour's life, e. g., His birth, His adoration by the Magi, His priesthood and holy doctrine, His Passion, Resurrection and Ascension, and finally the establishment of the Church: all this is appropriately said of Our Lord Jesus only.

6. When we come within the period of one thousand years immediately preceding the coming of the Messiah, God, as it were, to forestall the unbelievers of ages to come, sent His prophets in rapid succession to announce more clearly the advent of the Messiah or Redeemer: His mission as teacher and lawgiver, as well as His life and His miraculous and divine power. Among others, the Prophet Joel (Joel ii. 28, 29) about 850 before Christ announced the descent of the Holy Ghost which was accomplished on Pentecost; Isaias about 800 B. C.,

predicted that a Saviour would be born of a Virgin (Is. vii. 14); His life, sufferings and death were described with such characteristic reality that the Prophet is often called the prophet-historian (Ib. l iii), and he announced Him as of the tribe of Juda and of the house of David (Is. xi. 1-10). Many passages of the New Testament (Mark ix. 11), (Mat. viii. 17), (Acts viii. 32), (1 Cor. xv. 3) prove that the Apostles and the Jews applied all these prophecies to Jesus of Nazareth.

Micheas foretold about 750 B. C. that the Saviour would be born in Bethlehem. (Mich. v. 2). It is notorious that the priests and the scribes answered Herod accordingly by quoting the prophet when he inquired where Christ was to be born. (Mat. ii. 45 sq.).

7. Daniel determines with exactness the time of Christ's coming: viz., sixty-two and seven weeks of years after the edict which permitted the rebuilding of Jerusalem at the end of the Babylonian captivity (Dan. ix. 25), and predicts that Christ shall be slain after sixty-two weeks (of years). (Ibid. 26).

8. Malachy (i. 11) predicts the institution of an unbloody sacrifice to take the place of the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, which would cease to be acceptable to God. The new sacrifice was established by the Saviour when He instituted the sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper.

When we add to all these predictions the testimonies of the Apostles of Christ, His own testimony that the prophets and the law had spoken of Him and His proof by His own miracles and predictions that He is the Son of God, equal to His Father, we have a superabundant testimony in Holy Scriptures that the Redeemer, the Messiah, the expectation of nations is none other than Jesus of Nazareth, our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ.

62. What do you believe of Jesus Christ?

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, true God and true man.

In No. 23 we have quoted from the Creed of St. Athanasius what must be believed by Catholics about the Blessed Trinity, and now we likewise take from that creed what we should believe with respect to the Incarnation.

"But it is necessary for eternal salvation, that he (who wishes to be saved) believe faithfully also the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ; thus the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus

Christ, the Son of God, is God and man. He is God, begotten before all ages of the substance of the Father; and He is man born in time of the substance of His mother. He is perfect God and perfect man, subsisting of a rational soul and a human body. Equal to His Father according to His divinity, less than the Father according to His humanity; Who, although He is God and man, is not two but one Christ. He is indeed one, not by the conversion of His divinity into His flesh, but by the assumption of His humanity into God. One altogether, not by the confusion of substance, but by the unity of person; for as the rational soul and the body are one man, so likewise God and man are one Christ."

In No. 60 we have seen that it was necessary that a God become man, in the supposition that God demanded an adequate satisfaction for Adam's sin. Now the Son of God became incarnate rather than the Father or the Holy Ghost. We will, with the Angelic Doctor, try to explain why the Son of God became man, and not the Father, or the Holy Ghost.

St. Thomas (P. III, q. 3, a. 8) finds two arguments therefor in the two natures to be united, the nature of God and the nature of man; he sees a third reason for it in the end or object which God had in view in the incarnation, and a fourth argument in the motive which prompted Adam to sin.

1. When the union of the two natures is considered, it seems most suitable that the person of the Son become man. The Second Person, the Son, is the Image or the Word of God, the exemplar which the divine Architect employed in bringing all things out of nothing. There is then a certain likeness or similarity between man and God's Image, the Son, and it seems that similar things should unite; especially so, because through the Incarnation man was to be restored to his former dignity and perfection, according to the original plan of which the Son is the exemplar in the restoration as well as in the creation.

2. Again, the Word or Son of God is a concept of eternal Wisdom, from which all wisdom in man is derived; for man becomes perfect through wisdom as a disciple under his master. Since man's wisdom is a participation in God's wisdom, we see the propriety of the union of the wisdom of God with man who is to participate in the eternal Wisdom.

3. When we consider the term or end of the union between the divine and the human nature, we find that it was man's restoration to his final destiny, for which he was originally created, i. e., to restore to man the inheritance of heaven lost

through sin, by re-adopting us all as children of God. "For the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God, and if sons, heirs also" (Rom. viii. 16, 17). Hence it seems suitable that whereas we participate by adoption in the Sonship of God, and become the joint heirs of the Son of God, that He, the Son of God, should assume human nature and thus become a brother to all of us, so that we might be by right "Heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ" (Ib. 17). "For whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born amongst many brethren" (Ib. 29).

4. When we ask ourselves what caused God to become man, we find the reason in the sin of Adam, for which He found a remedy; but sin of Adam consisted in an inordinate desire of wisdom i. e., the desire to know good and evil; hence it appears proper that the Wisdom of the Father, the Son, should be given the power to destroy false wisdom and thus remedy the evil; in other words, that man should be brought back by true Wisdom, because he withdrew from God through an inordinate desire for wisdom.

63. Why is Jesus Christ true God?

Jesus Christ is true God because He is the true and only Son of God the Father.

Christ our Redeemer proved His divinity by His miracles, by His divine doctrine and by His prophecies. He proved that He was the Messiah foretold by the prophets, who attributed to Him a power that can only be applied to God. He proved that all the prophecies were fulfilled in Him. (No. 60). Christ taught us that He is the Son of God, and in No. 25 we have explained the generation of the Son of God by an eternal act of the intellect of the Father Who knows and comprehends Himself in an infinitely perfect manner and in His intellect begets the Son, a perfect and real image of Himself. Moreover the Father in communicating His essence or substance, keeps it intact, and therefore the Son is consubstantial with the Father. He is of the same nature and substance with the Father and is equal to Him in all things. The Council of Nicea in 325 defined, against the Arians, that the Son is consubstantial with the Father,

64. Why is Jesus Christ true man?

Jesus Christ is true man, because He is the Son of the Blessed Virgin and has a body and soul like ours.

The belief of the Catholic Church is well expressed in the Athanasian Creed, from which we quoted in No. 62. In it the doctrine is laid down that Jesus Christ is God, begotten from all eternity, but became man in time; He is perfect God and perfect man, having a rational soul and a human body.

65. How many natures are there in Jesus Christ?

In Jesus Christ there are two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man.

There are two perfect natures in Christ, the divine and human nature. He is God from all eternity and He assumed our nature when He was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary. We are taught that the two natures are not mixed, or confused, but united; for after the Incarnation Christ remains true God, and He became true man without any loss to either nature. Hence as God He possess all the attributes of the divinity, and as man, all the natural faculties of the soul, viz., will, memory and understanding, as well as all the endowments of a human body. There are then two intellects in Christ, the human and divine, and likewise two wills. He is impassible as God and passible as man; uncreated as God and created as man; free from suffering as God, but subject to sorrow, pains and death as man. For as man by nature is subject to the pains of the body and sadness of the soul, so Christ after the Incarnation was subject to all the infirmities of the body and to the intellectual passions of the soul; but in those passions there could be nothing inordinate or sinful, for in Christ all passions were subpect to reason and reason to God. Christ could suffer from hunger and thirst, but could not experience even the slightest inclination to evil from the sensual appetites as man does; for evil inclinations are the result of original sin and there can be no shadow of

sin in Him. Christ was subject to the punishment of original sin, such as the sufferings of the body and the afflictions of the soul, because He so willed it and because He came to destroy sin and wished to teach us by His example the necessity of satisfying for all sins committed by man.

For thirty years Our Saviour conducted himself like other men. As a child He was cared for like other children; He grew like a child in age and in wisdom; He labored, ate and slept like all other children, youths and men. Until He began His public life, He was in the eyes of all the people of Nazareth, where He lived, with the exception of His Blessed Mother and His Foster-father Saint Joseph, reputed the Son of Joseph of Nazareth. During all those thirty years, He but once caused the doctors of the law in the temple of Jerusalem astonishment by His ready answers and learned questions.

During His public life, He proved that His mission was divine. He performed numerous miracles, He preached a heavenly doctrine; but He never denied by word or action that He was truly man, but on the contrary, He gave Himself the name of Son of Man. He fasted and was hungry, He ate, drank and slept; He was fatigued and rested; He wept and suffered pain and after the most excruciating passion and agony, He gave up His soul to His eternal Father and expired. Who could conceive the thought that His acts during the thirty-three years of His life were but a deception?

If Christ as man has no father, He lacks thereby nothing of the nature of man, for animation and life was given to the pure blood of the Virgin, when the soul of Christ was created, and the body so formed by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin, together with its soul, were assumed by the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Eutyches, who admitted only one nature in Christ, was condemned in the Council of Chalcedon, in 451, under Pope Saint Leo, and the Monothelites, who asserted that there is but one will in Christ, were condemned in the third Council of Constantinople.

66. Is Jesus Christ more than one person?

No; Jesus Christ is but one divine person.

The Council of Ephesus, in 431, condemned the heresy of Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, who asserted that there are two persons in Christ.

By the word "person" we mean a rational nature, a

complete being who can act by himself and has an individuality which distinguishes him from others of the same nature: an individual angel or an individual man is a person. Two persons may be alike in all respects; still their individuality distinguishes one from the other. Now Christ Our Lord is one person although there are two natures in Christ: His divine person, the person of the Son of God, is the person of the Redeemer, true God and true man; and why? Simply because the body and soul of Christ are, as it were, the instruments of His divine personality. As our personality lies in the soul, whose instrument our body is, and as our spiritual soul and material body are one nature and one person, so likewise Christ's human nature and His divine nature are but one person with the Son of God Who united both at the instant of the conception in the womb of the Virgin Mother.

But, one may say, if the divinity of Christ, His soul and body are but one person, then the soul and body are in all things subject to the divinity of Christ and how can then the soul remain free? The soul of Christ, although it conforms in all things to what the divine will of Christ directs, still remains free, because being illuminated by divine light through the beatific vision, it sees that what God the Son wills and commands is supremely proper and just, and it necessarily wills what is good. Likewise the body of Christ remains subject to the soul and through His soul to the divinity, and also obeys the divine will of Christ in all the acts that surpass the powers of the soul, e. g., in the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, the Ascension, etc.

1. It must be borne in mind that from the moment of the Incarnation the divinity of Christ is and will forever remain with His soul and with His body. The soul and body may be separated, as during the time intervening between Our Lord's death and resurrection, but neither Christ's soul nor His body can be separated at any time from His divinity.

2. It would be temerity, if not heresy, to deny that the soul of Christ, at the moment of His Incarnation was endowed with the plentitude of sanctifying grace (John i. 14), and hence with all the virtues which proceed from it and confer power to practice all that is most perfect in God's sight, according to the words of St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 10): "By the grace of God, I am what I am and His grace in me hath not been void, but I have labored

more abundantly than all they; yet not I, but the grace of God with me." Christ also received abundantly all the gifts of the Holy Ghost at the Incarnation, for of Him Isaias foretold (Is. xi. 2, 2, 3): "And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root, and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness. And He shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord." (Cf. St. Thos. P. III, q. 7).

67. Was Jesus Christ always God?

Jesus Christ was always God, as He is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, equal to His Father from all eternity.

68. Was Jesus Christ always man?

Jesus Christ was not always man, but became man at the time of His Incarnation.

Both these truths have now been fully explained. Christ is God and therefore eternal, and Christ is also man and therefore was born in time; and furthermore, the time of His Incarnation happened more than nineteen hundred years ago. History leaves no doubt in our mind of the existence of Jesus of Nazareth, of His life and of His death.

Jews deny that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah and the Son of God; Rationalists likewise deny His mission and His miracles; Pantheists and Materialists will not admit a personal God; heretics may deny His miraculous birth of a Virgin; but all must admit that there lived in Palestine over nineteen hundred years ago a man by the name of Jesus, the reputed son of Joseph of Nazareth. He who doubts the main facts of Christ's life and the doctrine He taught, must also deny or doubt the existence of all the great personages of antiquity. With such a man we cannot reason: he who is voluntarily blind cannot even see the light of day.

In No. 70 we will explain how the Son of God was made man.

69. What do you mean by the Incarnation?

By the Incarnation I mean that the Son of God was made man.

The word "Incarnation" is derived from the Latin "in" and "caro, carnis," i. e., flesh, and literally means the act of turning into flesh, or of becoming or assuming flesh. The word has been adopted by the Catholic Church to express that "the Word was made flesh," i. e., that the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, assumed our human nature.

70. How was the Son of God made man?

The Son of God was conceived and made man by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

To the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, must be attributed the work of the Incarnation; for as the acts of the three divine Persons are indivisible, with the exception of those acts which are proper to each Person in their relations to one another, as we have explained before, the Incarnation must be attributed to the three Divine Persons. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost willed that the Son should become man and the Son assumed human nature in obedience to the decree of the Blessed Trinity. (Cfr. St. Thos., P. iii, q. 3, a. 4). The Incarnation is attributed to the Holy Ghost not because the other two Persons did not have a share in it, but because the Incarnation is a work of love and tends to our sanctification, which is attributed to the Third Person, as omnipotence is attributed to the Father and wisdom to the Son. (See No. 98).

In the Incarnation we must necessarily distinguish: 1st, the act of God Who willed the Incarnation. In this mystery God revealed Himself to man and displayed His goodness, His wisdom, His justice and power: His goodness is not despising His powerless and sinful creatures; His justice, in demanding that man who was overcome by the evil one, should deliver man from the tyrant without force or constraint; His wisdom, in finding an appropriate solution regarding the price to be paid for man's liberty; and finally His infinite power, because there is nothing more difficult than for God to become man.

The beautiful reasoning of St. John Damascene may be further explained by considering God as infinitely good or In-

finite Goodness, and God cannot better reveal His goodness than by communicating it to man in the Incarnation. Therefore, since goodness is manifested through love and since our sanctification is the effect of God's love, the Incarnation is attributed to the Holy Ghost, Who is the mutual love of the Father and the Son.

2nd. We should also consider the Person who assumed human nature, and we have seen that it was most appropriate that the word of God, the Son, should have become man.

3rd. In order that man himself might redeem man, the Redeemer should be true man and a descendant of Adam, whose sin had made the Redemption and Incarnation a necessity, since God demanded an adequate satisfaction for sin. In order that the Redeemer be a true man, a union between the soul and body was required, so that He be "made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man." (Phil. ii. 7).

God chose, in preference, a descendant of Adam for the Incarnation, because it was proper that the remedy for sin should come from one of the race that brought sin into the world, and furthermore because the Incarnation increases man's dignity and manifests God's power by the choice of a descendant of a corrupt and guilty race to raise man to so great a dignity. "For nowhere doth He (Christ) take hold of the angels; but of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold." (Heb. ii. 16).

Not only was Christ to be the son of Adam according to the prophecy, but also of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David. The genealogy of the Saviour, as given in St. Matthew and St. Luke, proves that in Christ these prophecies were fulfilled.

4th. "God sent His Son made of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4).

It was most proper that the Redeemer should be born of a woman: a) in order that woman might be represented in the divine economy of our regeneration.

b) It was the most acceptable and convincing proof of the truth of Christ's humanity. If Christ as man had no father, He is not the less the son of Adam, Abraham and David, for His Blessed Mother from whom He took His human nature was their daughter, as all the Fathers of the Church prove in explaining the genealogy of the Saviour. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 31, a. 3. Cf. A. Lapide).

c) St. Thomas adds a third reason: for, says he, God by choosing a woman for the Incarnation completed the divers manners of human generation: for Adam was taken from the slime of the earth without man or woman; Eve was produced from man without woman; all other children of Adam are born of man and woman with the exception of the Redeemer, Who took human nature from woman only.

71. Is the Blessed Virgin truly the Mother of God?

The Blessed Virgin is truly the Mother of God, because the same Divine Person Who is the Son of God, is also the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

St. Luke, who relates the mystery of the Incarnation, attributes the following words to the Angel Gabriel who announced the news of her miraculous conception to the Virgin Mary: "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He . . . shall be called the Son of the most High . . . The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee and therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." (Luke i. 31-35).

If St. Luke says that the Son Who shall be born of the Virgin shall be called the Son of the Most High and the Son of God, we need not wonder that the General Council of Ephesus, convened in 431, held that the Blessed Virgin merits the title "Mother of God" and condemned Nestorius, who denied her that title. The Council, by recognizing the Virgin as the Mother of God, only repeated what St. Elizabeth expressed, when in an ecstacy of delight and admiration, she exclaimed: "Whence is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me!" (Luke i. 43).

The divine Maternity of the Blessed Virgin is clearly deduced from the doctrine of the Incarnation already explained, and is clearly taught in the foregoing text taken from St. Luke. Non-Catholics and many heretics object in general to the title of Mother of God, because, they say, the Virgin Mary cannot be the Mother of her own Creator and no creature however perfect can be father or mother of an eternal God, Who had no beginning; hence the Catholic idea of a Mother of God is absurd. Those that reason thus do not understand the Catholic doctrine on the Incarnation. Catholics are not required to believe that the Blessed Virgin conceived and brought forth a God Who did not exist before. The Incarnation wrought no change in God, because He is as immutable as He is eternal. God Himself is the Author of the Incarnation in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and her share in the Incarnation was to give her consent and supply from her substance the material, i. e., her inviolate

and virginal blood for the formation of the body of the Son of God. Hence, if the "Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," Eternal Wisdom had determined upon the Incarnation, and Omnipotence executed it; and the Son of God becoming, as it were, a willing instrument in the operation of the Holy Ghost, personally assumed human nature, i. e., a soul created from nothing and a body formed from the substance of the Virgin.

The Incarnation of Christ in the womb of the Virgin was partly natural and partly supernatural or miraculous. In so far as the Son of God assumed human nature from a virgin, His human generation was miraculous; but in all other respects it was natural, or as St. John Damascene expresses it: "The Son of God made for Himself, of the most chaste and pure blood of the Virgin, His flesh animated by a rational soul." This accords with the acts of the Sixth General Council held at Constantinople in which we read: "The Word was truly made incarnate (flesh) of the inviolate and virginal blood of the holy and immaculate Virgin Mary." (Act 11).

With right then we conclude with the catechism that, as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity is the natural Son of God and as the same Divine Person is also the true and natural Son of the immaculate Virgin, the Virgin Mary is truly the Mother of God.

It may be remarked here that as Christ Jesus is both God and Man, all that may be predicated of either nature, may with propriety be said of the Saviour in the concrete without distinguishing the two natures: thus we say that Christ ate, slept, walked, spoke, was sad, wept, suffered and died, etc.; all actions which belong to the human nature. Christ is the only begotten Son of God, equal to His Father; He is impassible, omnipotent, eternal, knows all things, etc.; all attributes that properly belong to the divine nature. When Christ said: "My Father is greater than I," He referred to Himself as man, but when He said, "I and My Father are one," He evidently spoke of His divinity. It is proper to say: God spoke to the multitudes, God suffered and died, etc., in reference to the Person of the Son of God, Who is both God and man.

What relation does our Saviour bear to St. Joseph? St. Joseph cannot be called the father of our Lord in the ordinary sense of the word. He was not His natural father since Christ as man had no father; for we have seen that the Holy Ghost formed the body of the Saviour from the substance of the Virgin. In a wider sense he may be called the father of Christ, when we mean to convey thereby the idea of foster-father.

guardian. He was the reputed father of the Saviour; the guardian of the Child Jesus and of His Mother, her consolation in her many trials, and the protector of the Holy Family until the beginning of the Saviour's public life.

St. Joseph's great dignity on earth, as head of the Holy Family well justifies the great confidence Catholics have in his powerful intercession in Heaven. The Church honors him as the universal patron of Christendom and sees in the great Patriarch Joseph, who ruled Egypt under the Pharaohs, a prototype of St. Joseph's power and dignity, and of his wisdom and eminent purity of life.

Why did the Son of God not become man immediately after the sin of our first parents? A first reason is found in Adam's sin, which was a sin of pride; for it seems proper that man should not have been redeemed until he acknowledged his weakness and infirmity. The corruption of the world, at the time of the Saviour's advent, was well calculated to impress upon mankind its inability to save itself from further degradation without help from above. Therefore holy men and even philosophers and poets sighed for the coming of the Messiah, so that He might deliver the world from its iniquities. A second reason is found in the propriety and expediency, which demanded that our Saviour should be announced by holy men; first, on account of His dignity, and secondly, so that He could without danger of error be easily recognized in the prophecies regarding the time of His coming, His characteristics, His life and His doctrine. It was finally expedient that the coming of the Redeemer should not be deferred much longer than it was, for the corruption was becoming so general, and all notion of God was so well-nigh lost, that the Saviour would not have been received except by a few, if His coming had been delayed until the end of the world or even for a considerable time. (Cfr. St. Thos. P. III, q. 1, a. 5, 6).

72. How could they be saved who lived before the Son of God became man?

They who lived before the Son of God became man could be saved by believing in a redeemer to come and by keeping the Commandments.

Adam and Eve and all their descendants could be

saved only through redemption. This was revealed to our first parents when the Redeemer was promised them. The exact time of His coming was only partially determined by the prophecy of Jacob, but clearly specified in the prophecy made by Daniel. But it matters not whether the time had been determined or not; all people from Adam and Eve to the last of their descendants, whether before or after the coming of the Redeemer, could be saved only by faith in Him; i. e., by believing that He would satisfy or had already satisfied for the sins of all men, provided however that this truth were proposed to their belief. (Cfr. No. 12).

The catechism adds: "and by keeping the Commandments"; i. e., the natural law until the coming of Christ the Redeemer, obedience to which was indispensable for the salvation of all men, then for the Jewish people, the observance of the Mosaic law was further required and after the Redeemers advent, observance of His commandments and the commandments of His Church.

The catechism does not say that belief in a Redeemer to come and the keeping of the commandments were the only things required for the salvation of those who lived before the Son of God became man. How was original sin washed away? How were personal sins, mortal and venial, forgiven before the Redeemer had founded His Church, established a priesthood and instituted the Sacraments?

It is the common opinion that for Abraham and his descendants, the Jewish people, circumcision was a sign of reconciliation between God and His chosen people, and that circumcision forgave original sin. But circumcision was imposed only on the male sex, and therefore we must suppose that either the presentation of the females in the temple, coupled with the faith of the parents in the Redeemer to come, or some other ceremonies or sacrifices were sufficient to blot out the stain of original sin of all the females and of all those not subject to the law of circumcision.

As for personal sins, whether mortal or venial, we must trust that in God's goodness and mercy, the sacrifices offered to the true God throughout the world, if accompanied with sorrow for sin, obtained the sinner's reconciliation and satisfied for his transgressions. But the same efficacy of satisfying for the guilt and punishment due to sin cannot be attributed in the same degree to the sacrifices and ceremonies of the Old Law, that we

are taught to attribute to our Sacraments in the Law of Grace. The effects of the former depended on the inward disposition of each individual who offered the sacrifices. That sacrifices even among those who were not of the Jewish race placated the justice of God, seems more than probable from the sacrifices of Abel, upon which God looked with complacency, and from the sacrifices of the holy man Job, who offered them up for his sons and daughters for fear they might have sinned during their festivities. (Job. i. 5).

Among the sacrifices of the Mosaic law there were sin offerings, and these, it must be conceded, had for their object the remission of personal sins.

73. On what day was the Son of God conceived and made man?

The Son of God was conceived and made man on Annunciation Day: the day on which the Angel Gabriel announced to the Blessed Virgin that she was to be the Mother of God.

The Incarnation, or rather the Annunciation of it, is related in St. Luke (i. 26-38).

The announcement of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin of Nazareth, espoused to Joseph, formed the object of the most important embassy that ever was. The King of Kings sent it; a prince of the heavenly court was charged with it, and it was directed to a Virgin, poor and until then unknown, but of an inviolate purity of body and soul, of the most profound humility, of the most complete self-abnegation, and of the most perfect devotion to the Supreme Majesty. And what was the purpose of the mission? Nothing less than the reconciliation of God and man, by the entire expiation of sin. The Son of the Most High was to be the Victim; but as He could not suffer as God, He would become man by assuming man's nature through the operation of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin, who would not lose her virginity by becoming a mother. Let hell rage, but may the heavens and the earth resound with the praises of the Lord!

The Church commemorates the Annunciation on the 25th of March, and St. Augustine tells us that, according to an old tradition, the Incarnation was accomplished on that date. Certain it is that since the fifth century, the Eastern and Western Churches have celebrated the feast on that day. In 1096, in the Council of

Clermont, Urban XI decreed that every day, morning, noon and evening, the church bells should be rung and the "Hail Mary" recited in memory of the Incarnation. This practice is called the "Angelus." Several sovereign pontiffs have since enriched the devotion with many indulgences.

74. On what day was Christ born?

Christ was born on Christmas Day in a stable at Bethlehem over nineteen hundred years ago.

Our catechism teaches us that Christ the Son of God was born in a stable at Bethlehem, situated in a southernly direction and at a distance of about five miles from Jerusalem, and that the day on which He was born is called Christmas Day. The circumstances that attended the birth of Christ are given in the Gospel of St. Luke (ii; 1-20); but whether the birth of Christ was in all respects like the birth of other children, the Gospel does not say.

We are taught by the Doctors of the Church that the birth of Christ was miraculous in this, that the Virgin Mother brought forth the Son of God without pain and without loss to her virginal purity and integrity.

The Roman Catechism explains this miracle in the following manner: "Christ was born of His Mother in a manner similar to what happened at His Resurrection when He came forth from the sepulchre, which was sealed and closed; or as when He entered the room where the disciples were assembled, the door being shut (John xx. 19). Likewise we encounter a similar occurrence in nature every day, for, as the rays of the sun penetrate the substance of glass without injuring or breaking it, so did Jesus Christ come forth from His Mother's womb without injury to her maternal virginity. The mysterious operation of the Holy Ghost at the conception and birth of the Son of God is the Virgin Mary's singular privilege, for it imparted to her fecundity, and yet preserved inviolate her perpetual virginity. (Cf. Rom. Cat.).

That our Saviour was born in a stable is inferred from Holy Scripture, for the Infant Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger (Luke ii. 12); and the shepherds

found Joseph and Mary and the Infant lying in a manger. (Ib. 16). The wooden manger, an object of great veneration to St. Paula and St. Jerome, was, with some stones from the grotto, translated to Rome in the fifth century and placed in the church of St. John Lateran, where it may still be seen. Although neither ox nor ass are mentioned by St. Luke as the occupants of the stable, St. Jerome who lived so many years in a grotto adjacent to the one where Christ was born, speaks of it in one of his letters and the tradition has, it seems, been successfully defended by grave authors, such as Baronius and Benedict XIV.

The grotto of the Nativity hewn from calcarious rock is about forty feet in length and twelve feet in width. The entrance to it is narrow, but there is nothing about it to indicate what was the original situation of the grotto with respect to the city of Bethlehem; for in order to build over it the magnificent Church of the Nativity, attributed to St. Helena and begun about 326, as well as several monasteries, convents and hospices built nearby by St. Paula, a half century later, a great deal of levelling and filling had to be done, which necessarily changed the whole aspect of the neighborhood. Following the opinion of St. Jerome, who was for many years the spiritual director of the establishments due to the generosity and piety of St. Paula, we assert as probable that the grotto was situated in the southern portion of the city of Bethlehem and on the edge of rather a steep incline, now a bluff, to which animals had access from the valley below. A path on the side of the hill led also to the plain where the shepherds kept watch over their flocks. St. Luke ii. 8). From St. Luke (Ib. 7) we infer that there was only one inn or caravansary in the little town of Bethlehem, and since there was no room in it, Joseph and Mary had to take refuge in the stable, adjoining on the slope of the hill and forming part of the inn.

The feast of Christmas is celebrated in the Catholic Church on the 25th of December, in memory of the birth of Christ, and the day was observed in some places as early as the fourth century; but the practice did not become general in the West until the pontificate of Liberius (352-366). St. John Chrysostom labored with energy to introduce it into the Eastern Church and his zeal and eloquence brought it into general recognition as the parent feast of all others. Benedict XIV ordered it to be celebrated with great solemnity, placing it in dignity immediately after Easter and Pentecost.

All priests have the privilege to say three Masses on Christmas Day, and Benedict XIV has proved that in former times Popes said three Masses on this Day: one in St. Mary Maior (Liberian Basilica), one in the church of St. Anastasia, and the third in the Vatican. The custom has now become uni-

versal to commemorate by three Masses the triple birth of Christ: His eternal generation from the Father, His birth in time of the Virgin, and His spiritual birth in our souls through faith and charity.

75. How long did Christ remain on earth?

Christ lived on earth about thirty-three years, and led a most holy life in poverty and suffering.

The New Testament, and especially the history of Christ's life and death described in the four Gospels, prove abundantly the poverty and suffering of the Redeemer. Of Himself the Saviour could truly say: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head" (Luke ix. 58). It was fitting that Christ's poverty should be exemplary, in order to repress covetousness, the root of all evil (Cfr. No. 59), and in order that His disciples and all those who preach the Christian Religion should shun riches incompatible with their obligation. And so He also enjoined upon the twelve Apostles: "Do not possess gold, nor silver, nor money." (Mat. x. 9).

Christ's sufferings were of the soul as well as of the body, for "His soul was sorrowful even unto death" and the acute pains He suffered in His delicate body from the stripes He received, from the crowning with thorns, from the cruel crucifixion, and above all from His terrible and long agony, when He cried out: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—all these pains likewise affected the sensibility of His soul. But what caused above all the greatest sorrow to our Lord was the ingratitude and indifference of those who neglected His teachings, ascribed His miracles to evil spirits and thus made His very meekness and suffering an occasion for insult and indignities, precluding thereby all hope of their salvation. The knowledge that His precious blood would be spilled in vain for so many millions that have lived and will live, must, more than all else, have wounded the loving Heart of the Saviour beyond all comprehension.

Let it not be objected that Christ's soul on account of the union of the two natures into one person, enjoyed the beatific vision and that He received thereby such great delight that sorrow was impossible. Joy and sadness, some think, cannot exist together in the soul. That is a mistake, for the same event, considered under different aspects, may cause both emotions, e. g., a battle fought may cause the death of friends and fellow-citizens over whose loss we grieve, but, if it brought freedom from tyranny, we may at the same time rejoice over our delivery from servitude. Besides, the sorrows of Christ were in the inferior part of the soul, but His intellect and will remained firmly fixed in the divinity. Seeing and understanding the Divine Will, Christ could not will but what His heavenly Father willed. Although the human and divine natures were united in the person of Christ, both natures preserved their natural properties and hence He felt all the bitterness of His passion as if such a union had never existed. (R. C.)

Nor is there anything to prevent us from supposing that God, in a miraculous manner, withheld from the soul of Christ the clear vision of the Divinity, to allow the Saviour to experience the terrible dereliction He so pitifully expressed in the complaint to His Father, at the supreme moment of His dreadful agony.

76. Why did Christ live so long on earth?

Christ lived so long on earth to show us the way to heaven by His teachings and example.

Since one painful act of our Divine Lord, performed for our salvation, was of infinite value there was no need of His thirty years' sojourn upon earth to satisfy for our sins and to redeem us from the slavery of the devil. But God willed that we should work out our own salvation. He redeemed us by paying with His precious blood the price of our ransom; yet we shall not be saved without our co-operation. Is it meet that the Just One should suffer, and that the sinner should without labor on his part enter into glory, when his Redeemer was exalted and glorified only after a holy life of poverty and suffering? Christ redeemed us, and by that title alone has He acquired the absolute right to dictate in what manner we shall merit our salvation.

1. Christ wills that all people in the world and for all time to come, shall believe in Him and in His mission, namely, that

He was sent to destroy iniquity and establish justice, peace and charity among men, as well as to reopen to us the gates of heaven.

2. He demands an acknowledgment on our part that our redemption and salvation as well as all the means established by Him to obtain it, are due solely to His goodness and generosity, and that without Him we should all be lost. Therefore our prayers always end with the words "Through Christ our Lord," for all grace of whatever nature or kind comes to us only through Christ.

3. He requires of us that we shall observe the natural law inscribed in the hearts of men from the beginning of the world, not as understood by the Pharisees, but perfected and explained by Him in His teaching and exemplified in His life.

4. In order that His will be carried out for all time to come, He demanded that we should obey not only Himself, but likewise His representatives on earth, who were to continue His mission and spread His doctrine after His return to His heavenly Father, and who were to command by His authority whatever may tend to the salvation of those committed to their care.

5. His doctrine might have been misunderstood, if His own life had not added an object-lesson to its simple and clear enunciation; and the arduous duties of the sublime virtues which He inculcated, might have dismayed the pusillanimous and timid, if He Himself first of all had not practiced all the virtues and good works He imposed on those who wished to become His disciples. Therefore we read in the Acts (i. 1) that Jesus "began to do and to teach" all things required of His followers. He first practiced whatever He taught others to observe.

6. If we add to all the public teachings of our Blessed Lord, the private instructions given to His Apostles in order to prepare them for their exalted position and enable them to continue the work He had begun, we shall be forced to conclude that the time our Saviour passed on earth was well spent and that not a moment was lost. He came to do the will of His Father always and everywhere, and He passed most of His nights in prayer, bent solely upon procuring the honor and glory of the Father Who had begotten Him and upon securing the salvation of the souls of those whom His Father had given Him (John xvii. 9), so that none of them might be lost. (Ib. 12).

LESSON THE EIGHTH

ON OUR LORD'S PASSION, DEATH, RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

77. What did Jesus Christ suffer?

Jesus Christ suffered a bloody sweat, a cruel scourging, was crowned with thorns and was crucified.

This passion of our Lord began in the Garden of Gethsemane, also called the Garden of Olives, and culminated in His death on the cross. It is related by the four Evangelists, and we refer to the history of Christ's sufferings and death for frequent meditations, bearing in mind not only what He suffered, but the intensity of the pain of One Who was in body and soul so much more perfect than other children of Adam, and therefore more sensitive to anguish of the body and of the soul. We should also, when meditating on the passion, ask ourselves the following questions: Who suffered? What did He suffer? For whom did He suffer? What return should we make for the benefit of the Redemption?

The Apostles' creed has the following on the suffering of Christ: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried."

We are here taught that when Pontius Pilate governed the Province of Judea in the name of the Roman Emperor, Tiberius Caesar, Christ the Lord was nailed to the Cross. Why does St. Paul (1 Tim. vi. 13) fix the time of Christ's crucifixion with so much precision? Surely, because it is an event of the greatest importance which should be easily verified by all. For the same reason the Evangelist St. Luke has determined the time of of Christ's birth, viz., during the reign of Herod. Besides, in the event of Christ's death is found the fulfillment of the Saviour's prediction: "They shall deliver Him to the Gentiles, to be mocked and scourged, and crucified." (Mat. xx. 19). Pontius Pilate was a Roman governor, and to him the Jews delivered Jesus the Saviour. Finally, by determining the time of Christ's death under a Roman governor, St. Matthew shows that the scepter of authority had passed from the house of Juda and that the Messiah had already come. Jacob's prophecy was thus fulfilled. (Gen. xlix. 10).

78. On what day did Christ die?

Christ died on Good Friday.

It was on a Friday that the Saviour died, for St. John (xix. 14, 31) calls the day of Christ's passion and death the "parasceve" and the "parasceve" of the Pasch." From verse 31 we learn that the next day was the great Sabbath, the Pasch of the Jews, and therefore the previous days was called "parasceve" or day of preparation, because on that day all things necessary for the Paschal Sabbath were prepared, for on the Pasch itself no labor could be performed, not even the cooking of meals.

79. Why do you call that day "good", on which Christ died so sorrowful a death?

We call that day "good", on which Christ died so sorrowful a death, because by His death, He showed His great love for man and purchased for him every blessing.

The name of "Good Friday" is very appropriately given to the day on which Christ Our Lord died, for all supernatural good has come to us through that love which He manifested when He died for us; for surely "greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John xv. 13).

The principal blessings purchased for us by Christ are clearly set forth in Holy Writ: 1st, The Passion of Our Lord washed away all sins. "Who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood." (Ap. i, 5). And again the Apostle says: "You when you were dead in your sins, He hath quickened together with Him, forgiving you all offenses, blotting out the handwriting of the decree that was against us . . . and fastening it to the Cross." (Col. ii. 13, 14). 2nd, He has rescued us from the tyranny of the devil, by paying the ransom for our delivery; and hence our Lord Himself says: "Now is the judgment of the world; now shall the prince of this world (the devil) be cast out, and I,

if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself." (John xii. 31, 32). The ransom paid by Christ for our delivery is of infinite value, for He offered Himself "an oblation and sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness." (Eph. v. 2). 3rd, He also discharged the debt incurred through our sins and reconciled us with God His Father (2. Cor. v. 19), so that no matter how great the world's iniquity may be and the punishment due therefor, His blood wipes out all outstanding debts to sin. 4th, Christ by His death opened again the gates of Heaven that were closed against the whole human race, so that now "we have confidence of entering into the Holies (Heaven) by the blood of Christ." (Heb. x. 19. Cf. Rom. Cat.)

The efficacy of Christ's death on the Cross is well typified in the effects produced on those who, having been bitten by the fiery serpents, were healed by looking at the brazen serpent, which Moses had made in obedience to God's command. (Num. xxi. 6-9).

80. Where did Christ die?

Christ died on Mount Calvary.

Calvary, or Golgotha in Syro-Chaldaic, means a skull, and was probably so called, because it was a place for the execution of criminals whose skulls were often unearthed near the mound, when new graves were dug. The singular "skull" instead of "skulls" does not militate against that opinion, as the use of the singular form for the plural is common in Jewish literature. It would be difficult to form an idea of the location of Calvary with respect to the city of Jerusalem were it not for the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which St. Helena ordered to be built about 326. It is to-day, as to the ground-plan which covers three sites under one roof, what is was nearly sixteen centuries ago. The three sites are of great historical value, and they are the Holy Sepulchre, Calvary or the place of Christ's crucifixion, and the spot where St. Helena found the Cross

of Our Lord and the crosses of the two malefactors crucified with Him. As can easily be imagined these three sites are not on the same level. The top of Calvary, to judge from the ground around it which was leveled to admit of a level floor for the center aisle of the original basilica, must have been about fourteen feet higher than the ground at the entrance of the tomb, where Christ's body was buried. The third level, where the crosses were found, must have been on the north-eastern slope of Mount Calvary and possibly thirty feet below the level of the main Church; for the present level represents only the place from which St. Helena watched the excavations that resulted in the finding of the Cross. Moreover, it is probable that the three crosses were buried in an old cistern near the foot of Calvary. One descends to the Chapel of St. Helena built on the spot from which she superintended the work of excavation, by several flights of stairs from the level of the floor of the main Church. There is an excavation under Calvary called to-day "Adam's Chapel." This place, according to several ancient Doctors of the Church, is the place of Adam's burial; but the tradition, if it may be thus called, rests rather on an analogical than an historical truth. One thing, besides the historical evidence, that proves the identity of Calvary, on which Christ died, is the fissure in the rock which is easily traceable even to "Adam's Chapel" underneath. The split passes through the round hole in the rock, in which, as in a socket, the Saviour's Cross rested. It might well be possible that the sacred blood of our Lord hanging on the Cross ran trickling down through the crevice in the rock on Adam's skull, if it is true that Adam was buried there.

The analogical application referred to is this, that Adam brought sin into the world and the second Adam, Christ, with His blood washed away iniquity at its source, i. e., in the first Adam. The application would be perfect, if Christ had not died for our personal sins as well. What brought the skull of Adam to Calvary? It is supposed that Noah, who had religiously kept

Adam's skull, gave it to Sem after the deluge, when Palestine fell to his lot, and Sem buried it in a grotto under Calvary.

Calvary, now within the limits of the city of Jerusalem, must formerly have been near but outside the walls; for the Jewish law forbade the execution of criminals within the city limits. When the Holy City was destroyed under the Roman Emperors Titus and Vespasian, the destruction was so complete that but few buildings, if any, could have remained standing and the population was, for the most part, deported or reduced to slavery. When the city was later gradually rebuilt, the limits were extented further north and included the grounds around Calvary. This would be proved conclusively, if the gate in the old city walls or the walls themselves nearest to Calvary were located: a gigantic task owing to the well-established fact, that the people who first returned to the desolate city did not remove the debris of the ruins, but simply levelled the ground sufficiently to build on top of them. In many places the old streets have been unearthed and are thirty feet below the present level. This explains why Calvary is now within the limits of modern Jerusalem.

81. How did Christ die?

Christ was nailed to the Cross and died on it between two thieves.

It is absolutely certain that the Saviour was nailed to the cross with three or four nails; i. e., He was crucified in such a manner that the nails were hammered through His hands and His feet into the wood, and the common opinion is that one nail pierced each hand, and a third nail pierced both of His feet placed one over the other. This of course required a very large nail, and one of the nails still preserved in the Church of the Holy Cross in Rome rather confirms that opinion. Nothing prevents us from supposing that Christ's body was also tied to the Cross, in several places, and the cords, which St. Helena brought from Palestine, are also preserved in the same Church of the Holy Cross.

The Fathers of the Church explain the congruity of every circumstance that attended the Crucifixion. The scope of this work allows us to give only the most important points. Christ was first stripped of His garments before being crucified, in order to add to the pangs of His soul, when hanging naked before the gaze of His enemies. Crucifixion was chosen rather

than any other death, because the Jews wished to inflict upon Christ the most ignominious of all deaths. They accused Him of rebellion against Caesar, as that crime, according to the Roman law, was punishable with the death of the cross. He was crucified between two thieves, because it implied that He was the chief of thieves and murderers and the greatest criminal of them all. God the Father chose the Cross as the implement of torture, because He sent His Son into the world to confound the wisdom of the world and to conquer it by the "foolishness of the cross." (1 Cor. i. 19). Christ hung between heaven and earth, because He came to reconcile earth with heaven. Many other reasons are given by the Fathers which cannot fail to show the propriety of every circumstance attending the Saviour's death. (Cfr. St. Thomas. P. III, q. 40, a. 4).

It is worthy of notice that the Romans in crucifying a criminal first set up the cross and nailed near the foot of it a rest or bracket to support the weight of the body. Whilst the condemned man was standing on this footrest, his arms and feet were placed in position and nailed; but the Jews laid the cross on the ground, and stretched the body on it; then they nailed the hands and feet and raised the cross with the body nailed thereon. In the latter case death came more quickly and the body was taken down before dark according to law.

82. Why did Christ suffer and die?

Christ suffered and died for our sins.

The principle reason, which Christ had in view in becoming man and dying for us, was to redeem us by delivering us from sin and hell. But to accomplish our redemption, even if God demanded an adequate satisfaction for the sins of Adam and of all his posterity, any single act of Christ, however small, as we have seen, was a sufficient sacrifice to blot out all the sins of the world no matter how heinous. Therefore there are other reasons why Christ died.

Another reason that caused our Redeemer to choose death, was the desire of winning the hearts of men through that incomprehensible love for His creatures of which He gave proof by His desire to suffer the most atrocious indignities and finally the death of a criminal.

Jesus wished to teach us by His passion and death that a Christian must courageously take up the cross

and follow in his Saviour's footsteps; for unless we take up our cross and follow Him, we cannot become His disciples, or be worthy of Him.

Jesus also gave, by His death, an examplification of all virtues, so that whatever tribulations may be our lot in this world, we may have in the crucified Saviour a perfect example of obedience, humility, patience, resignation, meekness, charity towards God and man, and in all things an absolute conformity to the will of our Father in heaven.

83. What lesson do we learn from the sufferings and death of Christ?

From the sufferings and death of Christ we learn the great evil of sin, the hatred God bears for it, and the necessity of satisfying for it.

Nothing can give us a better understanding of what sin is than the passion and death of our Lord. Hell with its eternal pains is well suited to inspire us with a dread of sin through fear of its terrible punishments; but to understand the enormity of sin and its heinousness, we must contemplate the Son of God hanging between heaven and earth on His bed of torture. This sight alone, better than all other considerations, will teach us the great evil of sin, the hatred God bears it and the necessity of satisfying for it. Truly, it is not the sinner as such that is so relentlessly punished in our Saviour, for in Him there can be no sin, nor shadow or appearance of sin; but He is clothed with our iniquities and therefore the Father points to His well-beloved Son when He says: "For the wickedness of my people have I struck Him." (Is. liii. 8). Hence we must be fully persuaded with the same Prophet that "all we like sheep have gone astray, everyone hath turned aside into his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." (Ib. liii. 6).

But behold! is Christ not the Only-Begotten of the Father in Whom He finds all complacency, all joy and happiness, and Whom He loves with an eternal and necessary love, so that He

would cease to be God, if He ceased to love Him? Truly, but in spite of all this, "He spared not even His own Son but delivered Him up for us all." (Rom. viii. 32). And to Whom did the Father deliver His Son? To His enemies, to sinners, yea, even to the very fiends of hell. This is no exaggeration: behold the infuriated crowd around the cross of the meek Lamb; they are literally thirsting for blood and will not be satisfied until the last drop of the Victim's blood is spilled; hear their blasphemies, their imprecations, their taunts and jests and be convinced that hell has been emptied and let loose to avenge itself on Him Who came to destroy its power. The death of the innocent Victim alone can fully repair the insult and the offense to the Divine Majesty, caused by man's sin, and satisfy God's justice. Can we comprehend the malice of sin, the hatred God bears it, and the satisfaction or reparation that it demands? No; it is incomprehensible to our limited minds, for a Victim of infinite worth was required to wash away the guilt, to satisfy God's justice and hatred of sin, to appease His anger, to pay the adequate price for our redemption. Hence we cannot understand the malice of sin and its frightful consequences. If a Victim of infinite value was required to offset and wipe out the great evil, the evil itself must be of an infinite malice.

84. How was Christ buried?

Christ's body was taken down from the Cross by two holy men and buried in a new sepulchre hewn out of the rock. (Matt. xxvii. 60).

According to Holy Scripture the body of Christ remained hanging on the Cross for a while—it is not said how long—before it was taken down. It must have been removed before six, for, owing to the nearness of the vernal equinox at the time of Chirst's death, the next day began about six that evening, according to the Jewish reckoning, and this day was a great Sabbath day, on which no manual labor could be performed. Before evening, about five o 'clock, Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked that Jesus' body be given him. As according to Roman custom the bodies of those that died in public places for the amusement of the people, and of those who had been crucified, could not be delivered to their nearest relatives, until death had been officially certified, a soldier was sent to break the bones of those who had been crucified on Calvary, Jesus included. But when the soldier came to the lifeless body of the Saviour, seeing that He was already dead, he opened the side of Jesus with a thrust of his lance, and there issued from it blood and water, a certain sign of death. Upon

learning this, Pilate gave orders to deliver the body of Jesus to Joseph, who was assisted by Nicodemus, like himself a member of the Sanhedrin, and a secret disciple of our Lord. Both these holy men took the Saviour's body from the Cross in the presence of the Mother of Jesus, and with the help of other holy men and women they devoutly washed it, anointed it, wrapped it in a white shroud, and buried it in an adjacent garden in a monument hewn out of the solid rock, which Joseph had constructed for himself. They rolled before the door of the tomb a huge stone which was afterwards sealed in place, and the tomb was watched by Jewish soldiers sent by the chief priests and Pharisees who had been the instigators of Christ's death. All this Jesus permitted to make the truth of His death unassailable and His Resurrection the more glorious.

85. Whither did Christ's soul go after His death?

After Christ's death His soul descended into hell.

The doctrine here taught has been handed down from apostolic times to our day; for, although Holy Scripture makes no mention of it, the Apostles' Creed, after saying that Jesus Christ was crucified, died and was buried, adds: "He descended into hell." By this article we profess that the soul of Christ at His death descended into hell and dwelt there, whilst His body remained in the grave, until the third day after His death, when His soul again returned to His body and Christ rose glorious and triumphant from the dead. The person of Christ; i. e., the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, remained united with the soul and the body during the interval between His death and resurrection; for ever since the Incarnation, when the Son of God assumed our human nature, the hypostatic union forbids the separation of the divine nature from His body and from His soul, notwithstanding that the soul may be in one place and the body in another, as was the case after the death of Christ, when His body was still hanging on the Cross or lying in the sepulchre, whilst His soul was in Limbo.

86. Did Christ's soul descend into the hell of the damned?

The hell into which Christ's soul descended is not the hell of the damned, but a place or state of rest called Limbo, where the souls of the just were waiting for Him.

By the word "hell" in a general sense is meant a place of detention, or dwelling-place, inhabited by those who cannot enter into the abode of eternal happiness. In this general sense we must understand the word "hell," when St. Paul (Phil. ii. 10) says that "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bend of those that are in heaven, on earth, and in hell."

Our Catholic doctrine speaks of three places called hell: the hell of the damned, called in Scripture "Gehenna," the hell of Purgatory where the souls of the just are purified before entering into eternal bliss, "into which nothing defiled entereth" (Ap. xxi. 27), and finally the hell or place of rest, generally called Limbo, in which the souls of the just who had died before Christ, were detained, not as in a place of punishment, but as in a place of repose, in which they waited for their deliverance until the death of the Saviour opened to them the gates of heaven. It is into this last place, also called "Abraham's Bosom," as in the parable of the rich man (Luke xvi. 22), that the soul of Christ descended; and we must necessarily conclude from the words of Christ to the good thief, "Amen, Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 42), that the presence of Christ's soul united to His divinity changed Limbo into a heaven of delight, into a true paradise through the beatific vision.

It is probable that the soul of the Saviour also descended into Purgatory and delivered from it all the souls detained therein, granting to them the first plenary indulgence, just as the monarchs of this world are wont, on their birthday or on other great festivities, to grant full pardon to some of those who are detained in prison.

We might mention one other place which might come under the name of hell, i. e., the abode of children, of demented persons and of others who have died with only the stain of original sin on their souls, being thus forever deprived of the beatific vision. But as the nature of such a place is entirely unknown to us, and as the sacrifice of the Cross and the merits attached to it are purely supernatural, Christ's death did not affect their condition in any way, and therefore it is not probable that the so-called Limbo of children was ever visited by our Saviour.

87. Why did Christ descend into Limbo?

Christ descended into Limbo to preach to the souls who were in prison, that is, to announce to them the joyful tidings of their redemption.

The answer to this question is already pointed out in the previous number. The souls in Limbo, although free from sin, for its inhabitants were truly saints, could not enter heaven before the Victor over hell had first merited their deliverance from the slavery of the devil. The hope and trust of the thousands of thousands of holy patriarchs, prophets and other holy men who had so long sighed for the coming of the Redeemer, were rewarded this day. His appearance among them was a singular occasion of inexpressible delight; they were delivered from their prison, blessed with the beatific vision, and they were the companions of our Blessed Lord upon earth until they, with the Victor over death and hell, entered triumphantly into the realm of eternal bliss.

We infer from the answer to this number that there are three distinct reasons why Christ descended into hell: the Son of God descended into hell to conduct thence into heaven those holy Fathers, and other just souls, whose liberation from prison He had already purchased. This He accomplished in an admirable and glorious manner; for His august presence, at once shed a celestial lustre upon the captives, it filled them with inconceivable joy, and it imparted to them that supreme happiness which consists in the vision of God. Thus was Christ's promise to the good thief verified: "Amen, I say to thee, this day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." This deliverance of the just was long before predicted by Ozee, in these words: "O Death! I will be thy death, O Hell! I will be thy bite." (Osee xiii. 14). (R. C.)

Another reason why Christ descended into hell is, that there as well as in heaven and on earth, He might proclaim His power and authority, and that "every knee of things in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, should bend at His name" (Phil. ii. 10). A last reason we find in the desire of our Lord to suffer all the punishments for sin, and among them is death and descent into hell until He opened heaven to the just.

88. On what day did Christ rise from the dead?

Christ rose from the dead, glorious and immortal, on Easter Sunday, the third day after His death.

The Resurrection of our Lord is of the greatest importance for us, for Christ Himself has made it the foundation of our belief (Mat. xii. 39). St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 14) teaches likewise. From it we further conclude that God has accepted the sacrifice Christ made of His life, and hence that our deliverance from sin and death is fully accomplished; for death was the punishment of sin, and by His resurrection Christ overcame sin and death according to the words of Osee already quoted: "O Death! I will be thy death, O Hell, I will be thy bite."

We understand by the Resurrection that the soul of Christ which had been in Limbo during a part of Friday, the whole of Saturday and Sunday night, according to Jewish reckoning, returned to His body on Sunday, morning, and, as the soul is the life of the body, forthwith Christ's body which had been separated from His soul became alive again.

Catholics believe in the Resurrection because it is an article of Faith. He that refuses to believe that the Saviour rose from the dead, denies Christ and His teaching, as well as the foundation of the whole Christian Religion. Vain, indeed, is our faith, if Christ did not rise to life as He had predicted. The Resurrection is also an historical event that rests upon human testimony. The principal witnesses are the Apostles and Evangelists, they are eye-witnesses and therefore knew the facts they related; they are witnesses who could not deceive if they were so disposed, nor would they have deceived if they could.

First, the Apostles and Evangelists saw the risen Saviour; they conversed with Him and touched Him with their hands; and all this not once but often, and not only in secret or singly and separately, but likewise together with many others and under all circumstances. He even appeared to them when they were assembled to the number of more than five hundred. Were the witnesses possibly over-credulous? History assures us of

the contrary; for they would not believe the women who related to them that an angel had appeared to them and told them that Jesus had risen from the dead. They finally did believe, it is true, but only when they had seen Him and conversed with Him. Even some did not believe when they saw Him, although He showed them His hands and His feet and assured them that He was not a spirit: "for," said He, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see Me to have." (Luke xxiv. 39). The conduct of St. Thomas, who would not believe until he had placed his hands into Jesus' wounds is a sufficient refutation of the Apostles' credulity. (Mark xvi. 11-14; Luke xxiv. 9-43; John xx. 24-29).

Secondly, unbelievers say that the first Christians were deceived by the Apostles who stole Christ's body from the tomb and then spread the news that Christ had risen to life again. This was the story of the corrupted guards at the tomb, who having been frightened by the earthquake and the sight of an angel rolling away the stone from the sepulchre, had reported to the chief priests what had happened. St. Matthew (Mat. xxviii. 11-15) relates how the guards were bribed by the priests to spread the false news.

Can any impartial and sincere man believe such an imputation of fraud, falsehood and collusion made against the Apostles? Why were the Apostles never accused of the crime? Why were they not apprehended and cast into a dungeon? How could the timid Apostles take away the body without being opposed by the guards? The whole conduct of the Apostles during their lives proves that they were incapable of deceit. If the Apostles were too poor and God-fearing to bribe the guards, and too timid to rescue the body by force, what other reason can be adduced for the disappearance of the body? Did the chief priests and Pharisees make or order a search for the body? Were even any inquiries made by Christ's enemies? None.

The supposed removal of the body thus cleared, how could the Apostles have convinced the Jews of a falsehood, if Christ had not really risen? We need only remember with what hatred and envy the priests and Pharisees persecuted our Lord during His life, and forthwith the mere attempt of the Apostles to deceive the Jews seems absurd. Those that were powerful enough to have an innocent man put to death, would certainly have thwarted any attempt to spread false news that would glorify their victim. When the Apostles fell later into the hands of the envious priests, they were only told not to preach the name of Jesus, but they were never accused of spreading the false news of His Resurrection. The Resurrection was too notorious and easily ascertained: many believed but the obstinate only remained blind to a truth clearer than day.

Thirdly, the Apostles would not have deceived the Jewish

people if they could. A deceiver has always some personal advantage in view. The deceit need not be directly profitable, but should at least be profitable to some relative or friend whom he wishes to favor. Christ had died. To whom could the false statement of His resurrection be of any profit? It could not be of any advantage to the dead Saviour; and since He had been crucified as a criminal, a false report about His Resurrection could not redound to the honor of His relatives or His disciples, unless He could by some glorious deed blot out the ignominy of the accusations brought against Him, of His death sentence and of its execution; which indeed is unthinkable, if He did not return to life. Besides, it cannot be conceived that the Apostles would concoct a drama of falsehood, which no one could reasonably suppose would be believed, if it were but a tissue of forgeries.

But have criminals not often connived together and entered into the basest collusions for personal gain? True, but what advantage, pray, could the Apostles expect from their nefarious deceit? Nothing but a life of contempt, of misery and persecution, and finally a shameful death here upon earth and after this life the well-merited vengeance of a just God.

The conduct of the Saviour's enemies after the Resurrection proves conclusively that the Apostles were no deceivers. How easily could the Jewish priests and Pharisees have stopped the spread of the new religion, which the Apostles were preaching, by having them bound and brought before their judges and by having them condemned as imposters? No reason can be assigned for their neglect of duty, except that they feared the clear revelation of Christ's Resurrection and possibly the disclosure of their subornation of witnesses, whom they paid to spread the news that, whilst they were asleep, the Apostles had taken away Christ's body from the tomb. In what a sorry plight the unbelieving Jews must have been, when they found no other witnesses than those that were asleep!

The Necessity of the Resurrection and its Blessings. 1. It was necessary that Christ should rise again, in order to manifest the justice of God: for it was most fitting that He Who through obedience to God was degraded and loaded with ignominy, should be exalted by the Father. This is the reason assigned by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Phillipians: "He humbled Himself," says he, "becoming obedient unto death, even unto the death of the Cross; for which cause God also hath exalted Him." (Phil. ii. 8, 9). 2. He rose also to confirm our faith which is necessary to justification: the Resurrection of Christ from the dead by His own power, affords an irrefragable proof of His divinity. 3. It nurtures and sustains our hope; for, as Christ rose again, we rest on an assured hope that we

too shall rise again, because the members must necessarily arrive at the condition of their Head. This is the conclusion which St. Paul draws from the argument which he employs in his Epistles to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 12), and Thessalonians (1 Thess. iv. 14); and Peter, the Prince of the Apostles says: "Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His great mercy, hath regenerated us into a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible." (1 Pet. i. 3, 4). 4. The Resurrection of Our Lord was necessary to complete the mystery of our salvation and redemption; for by His death Christ liberated us from the slavery of sin, and by His Resurrection restored to us the most important of those privileges we had forfeited by sin, viz., supernatural life. Hence these words of the Apostle: "He was delivered up for our sins, and rose again for our justification." (Rom. iv. 25). In order that nothing therefore might be wanting to perfect the work of our salvation, it was necessary that as He died, He should also rise again from the dead. In His Resurrection, we acknowledge Him to be the immortal God, full of glory, the Conqueror of death and hell. 5. The Resurrection of Christ is also the model of our resurrection. Christ, as we have seen, purchased for us, His members, our resurrection by His death and Resurrection; for "by man came death and by a Man the resurrection of the dead." 1. Cor. xv. 21). Christ's Resurrection was the most perfect of all; and as His body, rising to immortal glory, was imbued with spirituality, so also shall our bodies, before frail and mortal, be restored and clothed with glory and immortality: "We look for the Saviour our Lord Jesus Christ Who will reform the body of our lowness made like to the body of His glory." (Phil. iii. 20, 21).

Remark. The Resurrection of Christ is also proposed to us as a model for our spiritual resurrection. This we learn from the same Apostle St. Paul, when he says: "Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father so we also may walk in newness of life; for if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His Resurrection." (Rom. vi. 4-6). Hence as St. Paul explains it a little further on, as Christ "rising from the death, dieth no more, death shall no more have dominion over Him; for in that He died for sin He died once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. So do you also reckon, that you are dead to sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Ib. 9-11). (Cf. R. C.)

St. Thomas (P. III, q. 54, a. 3, 4) asks the following questions about the Resurrection: viz., if it behooved Christ to rise

with a glorious body and also with the five wounds. Both questions are answered in the affirmative.

a) It behooved Christ to rise with a glorious body for three reasons: 1. Because His Resurrection was the cause and the exemplar of our own resurrection. (1 Cor. xv. 43). Hence if our bodies are to rise in glory, with more reason the body of Christ also. 2. Because Christ's body merited it by its sufferings. 3. Since Chirst's soul from the first instant of the Incarnation abounded in glory through the perfect possession of the divinity and the soul's glory did not redound to the glory of His body—which was due to a special dispensation of God on account of the Redemption to be accomplished by His passion—it is evident that when the passion was accomplished and the soul returned to the body, the body of Christ derived its glory from the soul at the Resurrection.

b) It behooved Christ to rise with the sacred wounds in His body: 1. In order that Christ might be honored in a particular manner for the suffering endured through His sacred wounds. The Saviour kept the wounds, not through inability to heal them, but in order always to carry about the symbols of His victory. 2. To give a visible proof to His disciples of His Resurrection. 3. To plead for us before His Father by showing what kind of death He suffered for man. 4. To demonstrate to all that were redeemed, what they owe to God's mercy. 5. Finally, to convince the damned on the Day of Judgment of the justice of their condemnation; for, according to St. Augustine, they will see the Man they crucified, they will recognize the wounds they inflicted, the side they struck, and the wound which was opened by them, as well as for them, and into which they would not enter.

89. How long did Christ stay on earth after His Resurrection?

Christ stayed on earth forty days after His Resurrection, to show us that He was truly risen from the dead, and to instruct His Apostles.

If the risen Saviour had ascended into heaven immediately after His Resurrection, His enemies might have had sufficient ground to claim that the Apostles and His disciples had been deceived and that they saw a spirit, which in their bewilderment they mistook for Christ. But when they spoke to Him, touched Him with their hands, heard Him explain the Scriptures, ate with Him and saw Him eating, witnessed the miracles He

performed and heard His injunctions and instructions for their future conduct, and all that at various times, in private and in public, during forty days, and finally saw Him ascend into Heaven, no doubt could be left in their minds of the reality of what they saw and heard.

But, some might ask, did it not behoove Christ to show Himself to others than His Apostles and disciples, as for instance to Pilate, to the priests and Pharisees, who had been instrumental in compassing His death? Let us remember that Christ did not intend His Resurrection to be preached only to the Jews of His time, but to all generations to come; and to preach it, He chose pre-ordained witnesses of His life, death and Resurrection. All people should be taught what is necessary for salvation, but it is not necessary that they should be taught directly by God: it is sufficient that the knowledge of all things necessary be suitably communicated to all those that are willing to arrive at the truth. God's plan to choose, among His people, superiors to communicate His will to inferiors is followed even by the monarchs of this world. Let us hear the Prince of the Apostles on this point: "Him (Jesus of Nazareth) God raised up the third day, and gave Him to be manifest, not to all the people, but to witnesses pre-ordained by God, even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose again from the dead." (Acts x. 40, 41).

We now come to the second part of the answer of the catechism, viz., that Christ remained on earth forty days after His Resurrection in order to teach the Apostles, i. e., to prepare them for the arduous duties to be imposed upon them.

The Apostles had been chosen by our Lord, not only to be witnesses of His actions and to become His followers and disciples, but it was also their mission to preach the new dispensation and the observance of all that He had already commanded and intended still to command. (Mark xvi. 15, 16). Before leaving the earth He would commission His Apostles to teach all nations: "Going therefore, teach you all nations; . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Mat. xxviii. 18, 19). We are not told all that our Lord taught His Apostles during those forty days, and it is most probable that He laid down only, as it were, the most fundamental truths of His religion, and among them the things most necessary to salvation and what regards especially the Church and her power. He left a thorough understanding of all religious truths, whether moral or dogmatic, to the working of the Holy Ghost, Whom they were to receive on the day of Pentecost; for Christ had promised that the Paraclete would teach them all truths, and besides He promised them His own

assistance for all time to come. (Mat. xxviii. 20). We know that our Lord during these forty days proclaimed in a solemn manner the forgiveness of sins (John xx. 21, 22), and gave to the Apostles the power to remit them. We learn from St. Luke that Christ explained to two of the Disciples everything concerning the prophecies that had been fulfilled in Himself. (Luke xxiv. 25-27). Holy Scripture also teaches us that Christ spoke to His Apostles concerning the Church, the kingdom of Christ upon earth (Acts i. 3), and concerning its government, and that He bestowed the primacy on Peter (John xxi. 15-18). We know likewise that He sent His Apostles to teach throughout the world all that He had commanded them and to baptize all people in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. (Mat. xxviii. 18). Now all those things are requisites absolutely necessary for salvation, viz., the belief in the divinity of Christ proved by His Resurrection and by the prophecies which were fulfilled in Him; the belief in the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; the belief in the Church, the kingdom of Christ upon earth, which was to continue His mission; an implicit belief in all what the Church teaches (Mark. xvi. 16); the necessity of Baptism for all people and of Penance for all those who after Baptism have fallen into mortal sin. These fundamental truths, as we have seen, were clearly inculcated by our Lord during the forty days following His Resurrection, notwithstanding that they had already been taught by Him during His mortal life.

90. After Christ had remained forty days on earth whither did He go?

After forty days Christ ascended into heaven, and the day on which He ascended into heaven is called Ascension Day.

From this answer we learn that Christ chose not to remain on earth for, as He had already begun, through His Resurrection, an immortal life, His proper place was not among mortal men, but to dwell in glory in the highest heaven, where death is no more.

We should also understand that Christ ascended into heaven as God and as man, not that the divinity can change from one place to another, but that the humanity of Christ remaining united to the divinity ascended into heaven. Hence we may also say, if understood as explained, that Christ did not ascend as God, but as man. He ascended also by His own power as God and man, for His soul had the power to move its body at will,

and His glorified body obeyed the dictates of the soul; and finally, since the humanity of Christ was and ever will be united to His divinity hypostatically, i. e., in the Person of the Son of God, the human will of Christ is in all things conformable to the will of God.

The history of the Ascension is shortly and simply related in the Acts. (Acts i. 9; Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxiv. 51). St. Mark is the only one that tells us that in heaven Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

91. Where is Christ in Heaven?

In Heaven Christ sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

92. What do you mean by saying that Christ sits at the right hand of God?

When I say that Christ sits at the right hand of God, I mean that Christ as God is equal to His Father in all things, and that as man He is in the highest place in heaven next to God.

We have explained before (No. 16) that God, being a Pure spirit has neither eyes, nor ears, nor, hands, nor feet, nor right side, nor left side; but that these are figurative expressions to indicate God's knowledge, power, etc., borrowed from our familiar way of speaking. Therefore when we say that Christ sits at the right hand of God the Father, we mean that as God He is equal to the Father, being the same God as He is, and as man He is next to God in glory, power and majesty; for God, says St. Paul (Eph. i. 20, 21) raised up Christ from the dead and set Him on His right hand in the highest heaven, above all the celestial spirits, and above all that exists on earth or in heaven.

The Ascension of our Lord should be to all the faithful a cause of great rejoicing on account of the many blessings which come to us through His presence in heaven. We should note particularly that the Ascension completes the earthly career of the Saviour; for to it necessarily tend the mysteries of the Incarnation, of the Redemption and of the glorious Resurrection; and as Christ is our Head and we members of His mystical body, He purchased heaven for Himself and for us. This naturally

leads to the thought that heaven is our home, and that to this earth we are temporally banished as to a valley of tears, in which we should constantly sigh for our happy home. Christ has gone to prepare a place for us (John xiv. 2), and He has shown us the only safe road to reach it (Mat. vi. 13), and finally from the highest heaven He beckons us on to come where He is (John xiv. 3), for He has constituted Himself our Advocate in all our needs, always "living to make intercession for us." (Heb. vii. 25). Hail to the Victor over sin and death, Who "ascending on high led captivity captive," (Eph. iv. 8) leading with Him all the souls of the just detained in Limbo into everlasting glory. (Cfr. Rom. Cat. for other blessings of the Ascension).

LESSON THE NINTH

ON THE HOLY GHOST AND HIS DESCENT UPON THE APOSTLES

93. Who is the Holy Ghost?

The Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

94. Is the Holy Ghost equal to the Father and the Son?

The Holy Ghost is equal to the Father and the Son, being the same Lord and God as They are.

Catholics believe that the Holy Ghost is God equal to the Father and to the Son; for the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost have one and the same divine nature, and hence, although the Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, He is not inferior to either of the other two Persons.

The catechism has taught us in No. 28 and No. 29 that the three Divine Persons are equal in all things, because they are consubstantial with each other; i. e., they have one and the same divine nature or substance, and the next number will teach us that the Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity and not the First nor the Second, because He proceeds from the Father and from the Son.

95. From whom does the Holy Ghost proceed?

The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and from the Son.

The Father is the First Person of the Blessed Trinity, because He proceeds from no one and that we cannot say of the Son or of the Holy Ghost; for the Son is begotten of the Father by an eternal act of the divine intellect, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son as from one principle and by one operation of the will. Why? Because the Father and the Son have the same divine nature, and the will or love which produces the Holy Ghost is but one act, although it is proper to the Person of the Father and to the Person of the Son. As in the divine nature there are but two distinct operations, one of the intellect and one of the will, and these two operations are simultaneous, eternal and essential to the divine nature, in the operation by which the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father, we should not distinguish two operations but only one, since the principle from which the Holy Ghost proceeds is only one. (Wilmer's Handbook).

Logically speaking, when there is question of created rational beings, the intellect precedes the will, and in the intellect the act comes before the knowledge or concept we form. When the knowledge of anything good is acquired, the intellect induces the will to act, and inclines the will towards the object that is known or understood to be good: the love of what is conceived as good, follows the good as understood by the mind. The first in order is the act of the intellect, the second is, what is conceived in the mind as good or bad, and the third is the act of the will which loves what is good and hates what is evil. This similarity between what passes in our mind and what Faith teaches us about the two-fold operation of the divine intellect and will, goes no further than to give us an idea why the Persons in the Blessed Trinity are called First, Second and Third Persons. The operations of our soul differ totally from those in the divine nature in these particulars: 1, our intellect is not always in action or we are not always conscious of it: 2, the image or concept in our mind is not the soul or a part of the soul, whilst in the Blessed Trinity the image conceived by the intellect of God is God. In the human soul the will is inclined or determined to love what is considered good by the intellect that has conceived

the notion and has approved of the concept as good. In the Blessed Trinity the image or Word conceived in the mind of God the Father is God, and therefore the love of the infinite perfections which the Father sees in the Son He has begotten, and the same perfections which the Son sees in the Father, necessarily impel a mutual love. But in God there can not be two wills distinct or separate from each other; therefore the mutual love between the Father and the Son is one love, one burning flame fed by the infinite beauty or perfections of God, which the Father contemplates in the Son and the Son in the Father, and the flame which the Father and the Son have lit burns eternally in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Ghost. God the Father begets the Son and communicates His whole divine nature to the Son, and likewise the Father and the Son by their mutual love communicate the whole divine essence to the Holy Ghost, so that the divine esssence or nature is totally in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Ghost, and they are only distinguished from one another in their relations of origin, i. e., the Son by generation from the Father Who has begotten Him and the Holy Ghost by the mutual love the Father and the Son have for each other. The Holy Ghost being the love of the Father and the Son is infinite holiness, for there can be no greater holiness, although incomprehensible to us, than the infinite love which loves the infinite good. (Ibid.)

To try to explain further the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son would not make the mystery any clearer; we can only exclaim again: "O, the depts of the mystery and knowledge of God!" The Infinite alone can fully comprehend the Infinite, and the only conclusion we can come to is, that the mystery of the Blessed Trinity is not against reason, but above reason, and therefore whatever God has revealed of Himself must be accepted in a spirit of humility, based on the knowledge of our nothingness. (Ibid.)

96. On what day did the Holy Ghost come down upon the Apostles?

The Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles ten days after the Ascension of Our Lord, and the day on which He came down upon the Apostles is called Whitsunday or Pentecost.

Whitsunday means white Sunday. This name for Pentecost is not used among the Latin races, and is used much less than formerly, probably because the first Sunday after Easter is properly called in the Church "White Sunday" (Dominica in Albis), and even that name is now rarely used among the peo-

ple. The name, it seems, comes from the fact that in former times many adults and also children received Baptism on the eve of Easter and Pentecost, and in the ceremonies they were given a white garment which they donned and wore for one week. They appeared with a white garment at all the functions of the Church and especially at the solemnities of Easter and Pentecost, each of which lasted three days, and they laid aside the white garment on the octave of the feasts. It is more than probable that the customs were not the same everywhere; for in the southern countries of Europe they appeared for the last time with their white garments, emblematic of baptismal innocence and purity, on the Sunday after Easter, still called "Sunday in white," now called "Low Sunday" among the English-speaking nations; but in the northern countries the greater number of baptisms took place on the eve of Pentecost and the baptized Christians appeared in white garments on Pentecost Day.

The name Pentecost means fiftieth. The descent of the Holy Ghost took place on the Pentecost of the Christians and not on the first day of the Jewish Pentecost. The latter was celebrated in commemoration of the day when Moses, commanded by God, proclaimed the Mosaic Law to the Jewish people from Mount Sinai. This occurred on the fiftieth day after the Jewish deliverance from Egyptian servitude. Our deliverance from the slavery of Satan is celebrated on Easter Sunday, the day after the Jewish Pasch. Therefore the solemnity of the Jewish Pentecost had occurred on the eve of the Christian Pentecost, as both feasts were celebrated on the fiftieth day. the Jewish Pentecost, on the fiftieth day after the exodus from Egypt, and the Christian Pentecost on the fiftieth day after Christ's Resurrection. It is evident from Holy Scripture that our Saviour's Resurrection took place on the first day of the week, that is, on a Sunday (Mat. xxviii. 1; Luke xxiv. 1), and that the Jewish Pasch occurred in the year of Christ's Crucifixion on the Sabbath, and therefore St. John tells us that it was a great Sabbath day. (John xix. 31). The four Evangelists agree in placing the Saviour's death on the Parasceve or eve of the Jewish Pasch. Hence if the Pasch of the Jews occurred on the eve of Easter Sunday, the Pentecost of the Jews began that year on the eve of the Christian Pentecost. The Greek text of St. Luke (Acts ii. 1) favors the explanation with regard to the day on which the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles, for instead of reading "When the days of Pentecost were accomplished," we should read "When the days of the Pentecost were being accomplished," i. e., before they had entirely past. Christ ate the Paschal Lamb, which was a figure of His immolation on the Cross, before His death, so that the figure might precede the reality; so likewise

the Jewish Pentecost had to precede the Christian Pentecost, on which the Old Law was abolished and the Law of Grace was proclaimed in its stead. Hence our Pentecost occurs on the fiftieth day after Easter, i. e., on a Sunday, as Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday. As the Jews celebrated their Pentecost in memory of the proclamation of the Mosaic Law from Mount Sinai, so now the Christians celebrate the fiftieth day after Easter in commemoration of the great day in which the Christian Religion was proclaimed to the world by the Apostles of Christ, who were empowered thereto, enlightened and strengthened by the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon them in the form of fiery tongues, as the next number will teach us.

97. How did the Holy Ghost come down upon the Apostles?

The Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire.

The Holy Ghost descended visibly upon the Apostles and upon the first Christian gathering, because Christ had promised His Apostles the coming of the Holy Ghost upon them. "I tell you the truth," Christ had said to them, "it is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not the Paraclete will not come to you, but if I go I will send Him to you." (John xvi. 7). The Son was sent by the Father to satisfy the divine Justice for all the sins of man, and after having assumed human nature, He appeared as man to teach us the way to salvation, which He merited for us. The Holy Ghost was also sent by the Father and the Son, and therefore, it was also proper that His appearance among men should be in a visible manner. Thereby God made it plain to all those of good will that the promise of Christ had been fulfilled, that, since Christ had died for all men, the treasure of the infinite merits of the Saviour were opened for all and would be communicated to all those made worthy of it by the power of the Holy Ghost, the mutual love of the Father and of the Son. Christ died that we might be freed from the slavery of Satan, and the Holy Ghost applies to us the Saviour's merits, making us children of God and sharers in the sanctity of the Holy Ghost, when sanctifying grace is bestowed upon our souls. The theological virtues, the supernatural moral virtues, viz., prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, with all the potential virtues, i. e., moral virtues, depending on them, and finally the gifts of the Holy Ghost (Is. xi. 2), are all infused into the soul when sanctifying grace is conferred. Grace is the principle and cause of the acquisition of new graces and merits, and of satisfying for the temporal punishments due to sin. (Council of Trent, Sess. 6, Ch. 16).

It was also a providential token of God's goodness to man, who was redeemed by the blood of Christ, and a sign of confirmation of the Apostles' first act of jurisdiction, that the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles and upon those present with them in the Cenacle, after they had elected Mathias to membership in the Apostolic College in the place of the traitor Judas. The whole nascent Church, or at least the principal part of it, was then congregated in the Cenacle praying for the coming of the Holy Ghost; they were about 120 in number (Acts i. 15), and among them were, besides the Apostles, the Mother of Jesus, Lazarus, Mary and Martha, and other disciples and holy women, i. e., all those who had been witnesses of Christ's Ascension. We see also that St. Peter acted in that first gathering as one having authority over all those assembled; he speaks, and he alone, he explains that as Judas has fallen from the ministry, another who had been a witness of Christ's public life (Acts i. 21-22) must be chosen to take his place, and what Peter had asked to be done, was done forthwith without contradiction. In him were first fulfilled the words of the Saviour, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist and gainsay." (Luke xxi. 15). May we not also conclude from this that the Holy Ghost by His coming confirmed, not only the acts of the first Council and the election of Mathias, but also the exercise of St. Peter's primacy as well?

We shall now consider in what manner the Holy Ghost descended upon earth. We must not imagine that the Holy Ghost assumed any figure or adopted anything created into a close union, like the Son of God, who assumed our human nature as His own. The figure under which He appeared on Pentecost Day, and the circumstances attending His coming, were only representations of His invisible work (Cfr. Wilmer's Handbook.)

The Holy Ghost appeared twice: once at the baptism of Christ by St. John the Baptist, and once on Pentecost Day, ten days after the Ascension of our Lord. He appeared at the baptism of Christ in the form of a dove, because the Precursor of Christ had been forewarned concerning the Messiah by a revelation from God Who sent him to baptize, that "He upon Whom a dove would descend is He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." (John i. 26-34). Since baptism is given in the name of the Father and of the Son and of

the Holy Ghost, the three Divine Persons were represented at the baptism of Christ: The Father by the voice, the Son was really present as the God-Man, and the Holy Ghost appeared in the figure of a dove, the emblem of simplicity and candor, of innocence and purity, of mildness and meekness; all of which were gifts of the Holy Ghost abundantly infused by Him into the soul of Christ from the first moment of His Incarnation.

On Pentecost Day there was first a sound from heaven as of a mighty wind that filled the whole house (the Cenacle) where the Apostles and all those gathered together with them persevered in prayer, waiting for the fulfillment of Christ's promise. "The Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles in the form of parted tongues, as if it were, of fire, which sat upon everyone of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak." (Acts ii. 2-4).

The sound was the emblem and figure of the sound of the Apostles, who were to spread, as divinely appointed heralds, the Christian doctrine with the rapidity of the wind throughout the whole world. The parted tongues represented the gift of tongues, or the gift to speak according to the understanding and disposition of their hearers; and the tongues, as it were, of fire were the emblem of the supernatural gifts which the Holy Ghost came to communicate to the souls of all according to their needs, for fire and light warm and pudify. These emblems and signs are especially applicable to the Apostles.

1. The Apostles, more than all others, on account of their apostolic mission, were filled with the spirit of knowledge and understanding, and enlightened in all matters regarding the Christian religion and its practices, according to the promise made by Christ to His Apostles at the Last Supper: "But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." (John xiv. 26).

2. The Holy Ghost appeared under the form of a flame of fire, because the Apostles were to be inflamed with the love of God. Their mission was an arduous one; Jesus had sent them as sheep in the midst of wolves. (Mat. x. 16). What trials, tribulations and persecutions awaited them; To overcome them all, and to persevere courageously in their noble mission—nothing

but the purest and the most ardent love of God could make them equal to this task. But the Holy Ghost is Divine Love, the mutual Love of the Father and the Son, and now that the Apostles had received His graces and a participation of that Divine Love, as well as His manifold gifts, a thousand deaths would not deter them from following the lead of the Spirit of Love. Therefore Christ had said to them: "I send the promise of My Father upon you; but stay in the city till you be endued with power from on high." (Luke xxiv. 49).

3. The mission of the Apostles was more than angelic, it was divine and therefore they were to be purified from all worldly affection and from all self-love. They were to be endued with the Spirit of Christ, for according to the expression of St. Paul (Rom. xiii. 14), they were "to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and not to make provision for the flesh and its concupiscences," but "to put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience." (Col. iii. 12).

98. Who sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles?

Our Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.

The Catechism in this answer refers to the passage of Holy Scripture, in which we read of the promise of Christ, made to the Apostles at divers times, that He would send them the Holy Ghost. "I tell you now the truth: It is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you, but if I go I will send Him to you." (John xvi. 7). And again: "When the Paraclete cometh, Whom I will send from the Father, the Spirit of truth Who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me." (Ib. xv. 26). Furthermore, Christ before His Ascension commanded His Apostles not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the coming of the Holy Ghost: "I send the promise of My Father upon you: but stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high." (Luke xxiv. 49).

Besides this visible mission of the Holy Ghost to which the catechism refers, and which had its fulfillment on Pentecost Day, there is another mission which regards the sending of the Divine Person by another Divine Person. This ineffable mission, although full of mystery, teaches us how one Person proceeds from another. We have already spoken of the procession of the Holy

Ghost from the Father and the Son, as from one common principle, which principle is their mutual love. If Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church, who have drawn from it their profound doctrine, speak of one Person of the Blessed Trinity as being sent by another, this mission is often applied to the relation the Persons bear to one another with respect to their personal and distinctive origin. The majesty of each of the three Persons is the same; their authority, their power, their wisdom, and all other attributes, are likewise the same: they are distinct only in their origin. The Father is sent by no one, because He is the principle of the existence of the other two Persons, and therefore He is not begotten nor does He proceed from anyone. The Son is begotten of the substance of the Father; yea, He is the image or Word of the Father, and therefore He is sent by the Father; but the same honor and glory is due to both, for "The Father hath given all judgment to the Son, that all men may honor the Son as they honor the Father: He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father Who sent Him." (John v. 22, 23). The beloved disciple frequently reiterates that the Son is sent by the Father, and the Son Himself teaches repeatedly that He has been sent by His Father. As to the Holy Ghost, He is now said to be sent by the Father and at another time He is said to be sent by the Son (Cf. No. 26); and again Christ Himself speaks of the Holy Ghost Whom the Father will send in His name, (John xiv. 26) or Whom He will send Himself from the Father. (Ib. xv. 26). What must we conclude from this? The only conclusion we can come to is, that as the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, He is therefore said to be sent by the Father and by the Son.

If anyone asks why the Son of God while on earth taught us the mystery of the Blessed Trinity and the distinction between the three Divine Persons so often, we shall easily find the reason in our final destiny after this life. Our happiness will consist in the vision of one God in three Persons, i. e., the Unity of one nature in the Trinity of Persons and the Trinity in the Unity. Therefore it was proper that at least a partial knowledge of the Blessed Trinity should be vouchsafed to us, especially so, when even a partial knowledge is apt to increase our love and gratitude toward God our Creator, by exhibiting to us the Father Who has sent His only begotten Son to redeem us, the Son Who has suffered and died for us, and the Holy Ghost Who has sanctified us and made us children of God and heirs of the kingdom of Heaven. Besides, the knowledge of the Blessed Trinity should impress us with the conviction of our nothingness and our dependence on God, and should make us more humble, and through humility bring us nearer to God, the Source of all good. (Cfr. Wilmer's Handbook).

99. Why did Christ send the Holy Ghost?

Christ sent the Holy Ghost to sanctify His Church, to enlighten and strengthen the Apostles, and to enable them to preach the Gospel.

The second part of this answer, viz., that Christ sent the Holy Ghost to enlighten and strengthen the Apostles and to enable them to preach the Gospel throughout the world has been explained in No. 97, for the sound as of a mighty wind and the fiery tongues, the figures under which the Holy Ghost was sent, denote the effects of His coming, and likewise the purpose for which the Father and the Son sent Him on Pentecost Day. There is another reason why the Holy Ghost was sent and it is expressed by the catechism in a general way, when it says that the Holy Ghost was sent to sanctify the Church. Sanctity is attributed to the Holy Ghost in a special manner, as has often been noted, and therefore the sanctification of the Church is also attributed to Him. Now the Holy Ghost sanctifies the Church, founded by Christ while on earth, by maintaining in Her bosom the purity of Christ's holy doctrine, of which she has the deposit; by keeping up the true worship of God for the edification of the faithful and the worthy administration of the Sacraments for their sanctification; and by inspiring the Apostles and their successors with true Christian prudence and undaunted courage to rule the flock of Christ wisely, and to frame just laws with a proper sanction in conformity with the intention Christ had in founding the Church.

The influence of the Holy Ghost in the sanctification of the Church goes still further. He not only abides in the Church in the manner explained, but He sanctifies each individual member of the Church, by bestowing first in Baptism and again in Penance if need be, the greatest of His gifts, viz., sanctifying grace, which He increases with every good action performed by the faithful Christian. By sanctifying grace and charity, our souls become the sumptuous temples of the Holy Ghost, wherein He loves to dwell, and with Him necessarily come also the Father and the Son who are inseparable from Him. This is shown in the discourse of Christ after the Last Supper: "If you love Me keep

My Commandments and I will ask the Father and He will give you another Paraclete that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of Truth . . ., you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you and be in you." (John xiv. 15-17). More clearly still, if possible, does Christ thereafter inculcate the same doctrine: "If anyone love Me, he will keep My word and My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." To sanctifying grace are added likewise all the intellectual and moral virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, but in proportion to the charity that animates Christ's sanctified members. To these must be added again the many salutary inspirations and actual graces, which are not entirely denied even to the wicked, but which are more abundantly bestowed upon the souls in which the Holy Ghost dwells as in a temple. (R. C.)

Remark. Let no one say that since God is everywhere in essence, in knowledge and power, He cannot abide, neither with His Church nor in an individual soul in any other way, because He is immutable and unchangeable, and hence, that He is, as to His divine nature and essence, the same everywhere, in a stone as in a soul. This cold doctrine will never satisfy a devout mind. God, it is true, is everywhere as to His nature, as well in Heaven as on earth, yea, even in hell; but heaven is His dwelling, because there the angels and saints see God as He is. The sun shines as well by night as by day, but we cannot see its light in the dark night, because the revolution of the earth hides it from us. What Catholic will deny that the Son of God in the Incarnation was united to our human nature in a more wonderful manner and in a closer union than our most intimate union with God? God cannot change but He can change us in Him. When we receive our Blessed Lord in Holy Communion are we not taught that our union with God is incomprehensibly intimate, because our souls are so transformed that we are like a piece of iron which, heated in the fire, becomes fire also? In Holy Communion we receive our Blessed Lord, i. e., the substance of His body, soul and divinity, or Christ whole and entire, and why should anyone fear to assert that the Holy Ghost descends in us together with His sanctifying grace, and that He really dwells in our souls as in a temple prepared by Himself for His dwelling?

In the foregoing texts of St. John's Gospel we are clearly taught in the promise made by Christ to His Apostles and to all that love Him and keep His commandments, that the Paraclete would come to them and be in them, and that the Father and the Son would make their abode with them. St. Thomas (P. I, q. 43, a. 3, 6) teaches that there is a common mode of existence by which God is in all things created: viz., by His essence, His power and His knowledge, but that there is also a superior mode

which properly belongs to rational creatures capable of knowledge and love. A rational being by its knowledge and love reaches God Himself, and in that manner God is said not only to be, but to dwell in a rational creature as in a temple. St. Paul agrees with St. Thomas when he says: "Do you not know that you are the temples of God and that the spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Cor. iii. 16). He repeats the same truth in different words in 2 Cor. vi. 19, and again when He says: "You are the temple of the living God" (2 Cor. vi. 16); but in no other way says the Angelic Doctor can a Divine Person be sent or come to anyone, except through sanctifying grace; nevertheless the Divine Person is then given. (Ib. 6 to 1). The Son of God, continues the holy Doctor, can be known to us by some other effects than through sanctifying grace, e. g., by belief in the miracles He wrought; but in that case it could not be said that He dwells in us or is given to us. In Article 6 of the same Question in the Summa, we are taught that two things are necessary that a divine Person may be said to be sent to a soul, viz., sanctifying grace and a newness of life which grace produces, and hence we conclude that the Holy Ghost descends with every increase of grace, and dwells in us as long as we remain in the state of sanctifying grace.

100. Will the Holy Ghost abide with the Church forever?

The Holy Ghost will abide with the Church forever and guide it in the way of holiness and truth.

Since the Church is to exist until the end of time, the Church will need at all times the guidance of the Holy Ghost. This is likewise proved by those passages of Holy Writ in which Christ promises to remain with His Apostles forever. For when He sent them through the world to baptize and to teach all nations, He assured them of His help, saying: "And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Mat. xxviii. 20). And how will Christ be with His Apostles and their successors? "I will ask the Father," says He, "and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever." (John xiv. 16).

LESSON THE TENTH

ON THE EFECTS OF THE REDEMPTION

INTRODUCTION ON VIRTUES

The effects of the Redemption are many: all that God does with a view to our salvation, whether in our souls, or externally, is an effect of the Redemption, i. e., is due to the merits of Jesus Chirst. The life, teaching, miracles of our Lord, are external benefits, so are also the works and doctrine of the Apostles, the institution of the Church, her teachings, government and discipline; even the holy lives of so many saints, are all external evidences of God's goodness towards us, due to the sufferings and death of the Saviour and tending to the eternal welfare of the individual and of mankind in general. Among the internal and supernatural blessings to be ascribed to Christ's merits, are sanctifying and actual graces, virtues, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost, and whatever tends to our sanctification through the influence which the Holy Spirit, dwelling within us, exerts for the perfection of our souls. All these will be explained in their proper place: here we aim to consider only virtue in general and its different kinds or species.

Virtue is a quality of the soul inclining it to good, and as such it is opposed to vice which inclines us to evil. This inclination is also called habit. Sometimes we apply the name of virtue to a good act as well as to the object to which the virtue tends. Thus we call faith both that which is believed, and the act of believing. Finally, the habit or inclination to believe is properly called the virtue of faith. (Cfr. St. Thos. I, 2, q. 55 to 1). It is in this last sense that we use the word "virtue" in this introduction.

The different kinds of virtues are distinguished by the diversity of the objects, to which they as specific virtues tend or incline.

a) Virtue is natural or supernatural: it is natural if it is produced by or has its source in the natural faculties of the soul and tends to deeds naturally good. He that feels inclined to acquire knowledge or dexterity in a handicraft, being apt thereto by his natural faculties, possesses a natural virtue, and he can acquire by natural efforts greater learning and proficiency in the arts and sciences. Benevolence or an inclination, through natural compassion, to relieve the wants of the poor, is a natural virtue.

A supernatural virtue is an inclination to do good deeds which exceed the natural powers of the soul, i. e., deeds supernatural in themselves or in their motive, e. g., benevolence becomes charity if help is given to the needy because God com-

mands it or counsels it. Thus benevolence, a natural virtue, is changed into a supernatural virtue, charity. As a supernatural virtue must be supernatural in its object, circumstances or end, it is always supernatural in its origin, i. e., it must come from God, and therefore it must be infused by God; whilst natural virtues can be acquired by our natural faculties, as we have seen. Hence the distinction between "infused" and "acquired" virtues.

b) When are the supernatural virtues infused in our souls? They are infused first in Baptism with sanctifying grace, and if lost through mortal sin, they are restored to us when sin is remitted; and whenever the soul receives an increase of sanctifying grace, the inclination for good, in which the virtues consist, grows in strength.

All virtues are not necessarily increased equally, for, although all vices are removed by habitual grace, still the vices, to which the sinner was addicted before his conversion, will make the practice of the contrary virtues difficult for some time. Moreover, although supernatural virtue cannot be acquired, specific supernatural virtues may be strengthened and perfected in a soul adorned with sanctifying grace, by the practice of those particular virtues; for the grace of God will never be denied to those who strive towards perfection even in one virtue. But it is always God that pours into the soul an increase of strength in that special virtue with an increase of sanctifying grace.

Note. The natural or acquired virtues do not deserve any further attention in this catechism, as they do not tend to the eternal welfare of man, except when they are infused—as was the case with the Apostles, who received the gift of tongues on Pentecost Day—and then they may, like miracles and prophecies, become a source of grace; but they are in no sense supernatural virtues, essentially inclining the soul to acts meritorious for eternal life.

c) Infused virtues, considered in the object to which they incline, are divided into theological and moral virtues.

The three theological virtues, so called because they have God for their immediate object, are faith, hope and charity. By the virtue of faith we are inclined to believe in God; by the virtue of hope, to trust in God; and by the virtue of charity, to love God.

As we can frustrate the aid received through the theological virtues for believing, trusting and loving God, by resisting the inclination, so we can by co-operating with it, make acts of faith, hope and love, and thus confirm and strengthen the corresponding virtues.

The theological virtues are fully explained in the lesson on the First Commandment.

d) Infused moral virtues are qualities of the soul inclining it to do what is agreeable to God, except in acts proper to the theological virtues.

Are supernatural moral and theological virtues necessarily connected?

1. The theological virtues are not necessarily connected, for faith can exist without hope and charity, also faith and hope without charity; but when faith is lost, the other two are lost, for faith is the foundation of hope as well as of charity.

2. As for the supernatural moral virtues, St. Thomas teaches that they are infused with sanctifying grace, which produces infallibly the virtue of charity, and therefore when charity and sanctifying grace are lost by mortal sin, all the infused moral virtues are also lost; sanctifying grace being a participation of God's infinite perfections cannot be separated from charity, not even in heaven.

Moral Virtues. The moral virtues are many, but four, viz., prudence, fortitude, justice and temperance, are called cardinal virtues, from the Latin "cardo" (pivot), because all other moral virtues depend on these as their potential virtues, i. e., they have their source in them and could not exist without them.

I. Prudence. Prudence is an intellectual virtue which indicates what must be done or avoided in order to act in all circumstances in conformity to the will of God and sound reason.

Thus it is plain that all moral virtues are guided and directed by prudence, for it is prudence that commands the will to act or not to act after the soul has taken counsel with itself. St. Thomas teaches that prudence contains three acts: the first finds out the means to execute the act proposed to the soul's deliberation; the second approves of the means as well as of the act with all its circumstances and consequences, as it appears to the intellect; and the third is reason which commands the will to execute what judgment has approved. (Cfr. St. Thos. II, 2, q. 47, a. 8). Hence counsel, judgment and command are three acts of prudence.

II. Justice. Justice is a constant will to give to each one his rights. The following virtues are built on justice: a) religion, which gives to God the worship which is due Him; it is after the theological virtues the most eminent of all virtues and with charity it will endure after this life among the blessed in heaven; b) obedience is a virtue by which man executes promptly the will of a superior (St. Thos. II, 2, q. 204, a. 2 to 3). It maintains order in society and no other virtue can exist without it. It is a noble virtue, for through it man sacrifices what is most valuable to him, his will; and it is likewise a most profitable virtue, for with it the most indifferent deeds become meritorious for eternal life. To practice this virtue in all perfection

we must obey promptly and with the simplicity of a child, i. e., without questioning the motives of the superior, and we must also obey with joy.

The other virtues depending on justice are: c) piety, which consists in deference and respect towards superiors; d) veracity, so necessary for our intercourse with our fellow-men; e) gratitude; f) liberality, and g) humility. There are two kinds of humility, one of the intellect and one of the heart. The first induces us to admit or to be conscious that we are nothing. By the other we are inclined to despise worldly honors, and seek solely the glory of God. Humility of the mind leads to humility of the heart. (Cfr. St. Thos. II, 2, q. 161, a. 6).

To acquire humility of the mind we need only consider that whatever we are and whatever we have comes from God; and humility of the heart, begotten of that of the mind, is nothing else but a profound subjection of all our faculties to the Author of all that is good in us, whether natural or supernatural. (ibid. a. 3). Humility resides principally in the will. (ibid. a. 6). As veracity is indispensable in our intercourse with our neighbor, so also is humility necessary to the proper relations between sinful man and his just and holy God. Thus humility depends on truth and veracity, but ultimately springs from justice.

Humility is, notwithstanding its logical affinity to justice, the foundation of all other virtues: it roots out pride, the greatest obstacle to grace, and the source of all evil; for "God resisteth the proud," and humility obtains the grace to preserve all other virtues.

h) Modesty, which is often called "practical humility," or "humility in practice," springs directly from the virtue of humility. To it are applicable the words of the Apostle: "What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received" (everything from God)—"why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. iv. 7). With regard to modesty, may every one observe these rules: 1. of yourself speak neither good nor evil; 2. of others speak always well; 3. obey joyfully; 4. disclose to your confessor not only your sins against this virtue but even the temptations; and 5. be mindful of modesty in looks, dress, words, laughter and deportment.

III. Fortitude. In a general sense fortitude must accompany the practice of every supernatural virtue, for it requires fortitude and constancy to surmount the obstacles which are encountered by a Christian in practicing the duties of his state of life; it requires great effort and undaunted courage to remain always chaste, humble, meek and resigned, just and temperate.

In a more restricted sense, fortitude is a firmness and constancy of the will, by which we overcome and suffer the most severe trials, and withstand those dangerous occasions, wherein

it is difficult to remain firm. (St. Thos. II, 2, q. 123, a. 2). Fear is opposed to fortitude, and causes dejection, as well as cowardice; hence it belongs to fortitude to subdue fear and to root up all its evil consequences, for with it we suffer the greatest evils with an unshaken constancy in order to execute any good conformable to sound reason. (ibid. a. 4). Fortitude goes further, and like a valiant soldier attacks, wherever advisable, the enemy in its cause and source by mortifying the passions of the soul, and by chastising the body in order to subdue the concupiscence of the flesh. In martyrdom is found the highest degree of fortitude. Virtues depending on fortitude are:

a) Patience is a potential virtue of fortitude, and is opposed to sadness. There is no evil that patience cannot overcome. b) Munificence which inclines to liberality in spending large sums for charitable, religious and pious purposes; c) longanimity or longsuffering in expectation of good results from virtuous actions, and d) perseverance in arduous duties.

IV. Temperance. Temperance is a virtue that moderates and restricts within proper limits whatever flatters the senses. The sensitive appetites, because of the pleasures they procure are more apt than anything else to pervert sound reason or the rectitude of our judgments; and thus temperance by an extraordinary moderation in all that excites the sensual appetites, subjects them or regulates them.

Through intemperance man becomes similar to the brute with its vices of gluttony and lubricity; for the brute has no intellectual passions, viz., pride, anger, envy, avarice, etc.; its felicity consists in the satisfaction of the two vices named. Temperance elevates man above himself by making him superior to his nature and similar to the angels.

On temperance depends: a) Chastity. There are three kinds of chastity: virginity, chastity of the married, and continency. (Cfr. Sixth Comm.—Chastity). b) Meekness is also a potential virtue of temperance, and is opposed to anger, one of the capital sins. Meekness differs from patience, because the latter overcomes sadness, which is caused by adversity, whilst meekness tends to repress anger provoked by insult, as well as all desire of revenge. Meekness is thus a virtue which moderates anger in accordance with sound reason. (St. Thos. II, 2, q. 157, a. 2). c) Clemency has some resemblance to meekness and differs from it only because clemency is exercised by superiors towards inferiors.

Note. The gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost and the beatitudes are fully explained in Lesson the Sixteenth.

Remark. In this lesson, the catechism after teaching us what sanctifying grace is, treats of the three theological virtues, faith, hope and charity. There can be no other reason for it, than that

the three divine virtues are infused in the soul with sanctifying grace; but we should not conclude from this that sanctifying grace alone is sufficient to make acts of faith, hope and charity. The divine virtues give the power to make acts corresponding to those three virtues, but not the will to act. For this an actual grace is required. We have our sight to see, but if we do not open our eyes we cannot see.

101. Which are the chief effects of the Redemption?

The chief effects of the Redemption are two: the satisfaction of God's justice by Christ's sufferings and death, and the gaining of grace for men.

This question and answer are but an introduction to a new subject, that of grace.

Adam and Eve sinned, and their posterity inherited their sin; but the all-wise and all-good God determined to redeem man and to redeem him in such a way that full reparation be made for the insult offered to the Divine Majesty through Adam's sin and through all the sins that have been committed or that will be committed by man until time is no more. An infinite God was to satisfy for man's iniquities which are infinite in malice. How? It was decreed in the bosom of the Blessed Trinity that the Father send His Son to assume human nature, for it was proper that man should redeem sinful man. The Holy Ghost formed the body of the Son in the womb of a Virgin. The only begotten Son of the Father, eternal by nature, was born in time. He suffered and died and He offered His sufferings and death as a ransom to deliver us from sin and eternal death, and from the slavery of the devil, to whose dominion Adam, by disregarding God's command, had subjected himself and his posterity and was thereby living in enmity with his God. The merits of the Saviour's passion and death are of infinite value and are available for past as well as for future sin; for He died to save all men. But how will the merits of the Saviour be applied to all? The Holy Ghost was sent upon earth to dispense the merits of the Redeemer to the Church founded by Christ and to each individual member there-

of, and the wonderful gift by which they are distributed to each person is called grace, of which this lesson treats.

102. What do you mean by grace?

By grace I mean a supernatural gift of God bestowed on us through the merits of Jesus Christ for our salvation.

Our salvation consists in attaining the end for which we have been created; i. e., the union with our Maker in heaven. Our happiness for which we were created will be complete when we shall see God face to face, or see Him as He is, and enjoy Him for an endless eternity. This destiny is entirely supernatural, for by nature we are capable only of developing the natural powers of the soul and body and of reaping the fruits of our human efforts; that is, of seeing, possessing and enjoying the perishable goods of this world. If our destiny is supernatural, the means to reach it must be supernatural or above the natural powers of our nature. Hence whatever gift God bestows as a help to gain our salvation and reach our eternal destiny with Him must be a supernatural gift.

It is called a gift of God, because we cannot deserve anything that tends to the supernatural: whatever may be the supernatural favor we receive from God, it is always a free gift of His goodness, or, in other words, there is no title under which we may lay claim to it, except, as we shall see, that he who is in the state of grace, may gain additional graces. This supernatural gift is bestowed upon us through the merits of Jesus Christ; and the merits of our Saviour, which are of infinite value, are sufficient to bring all men of all times to salvation. He is free to apply these merits to any person or attach them to anything He sees fit. It belongs also to Him to name the conditions upon which we may participate in His merits; but as He died for all, He is always ready to bestow them upon all those worthy of them. To the Holy Ghost is attributed all

that tends to our sanctification, which is a necessary condition for entering into the presence of God; but as has been remarked before, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost equally contribute to our sanctification. Nevertheless, the merits of the passion and death of the Saviour belong to the Son Incarnate Who suffered and died for us. "If anyone say that men are just without the justice of Christ whereby He merited for us to be justified . . . Let him be anathema." (Council of Trent, Sess. 6, Can. 10).

Now in order that the merits of Jesus Christ may be applied to us, our co-operation is required. "God created us," says St. Augustine, "without our aid, but He will not save us without our co-operation." This is so evident from the teachings of Holy Scripture—and reason itself shows the propriety of it—that no further argument is necessary. We must make the merits of Jesus Christ our own by our co-operation, and in the manner that Christ has taugh us. As the merits of Jesus Christ are applied to us through grace, the means by which graces are bestowed upon us will also be the means by which we shall share in the merits of Jesus Christ. "If anyone say that Christ Jesus was given of God to man, as a Redeemer in Whom we have to trust, and not also as a legislator Whom we have to obey; let him be anathema." (Ib. Sess. 6, Can. 21).

103. How many kinds of grace are there?

There are two kinds of grace, sanctifying grace and actual grace.

Under the general term of grace, according to the definition given above, comes anything supernatural that tends to our salvation and that is given in view of the merits of Jesus Christ. Now graces may be internal or external. Under the latter head would come the life and doctrine as well as the miracles of Christ, which, besides having the merits attached to them, fill us, when we read of them, with the most noble sentiments of adoration, love, gratitude and admiration, if not with a strong desire to imitate them. These graces are not graces in the strictest sense of the word, because they are rather external than

internal, and more general than particular to each individual. There are other graces which are not given for the personal advantage of him who receives them but for the benefit of others, and these graces are generally called "gratuitously given" (Gratiae gratis datae). These may be given even to sinners. Such are the graces of miracles and of prophecies, the gift of tongues, etc. These do not necessarily tend to the personal advantage or holiness of the individual to whom they are given, and, therefore, they are not graces in the strict sense of the word.

Grace in its strictest sense is internal and personal: i. e., given for the personal benefit and advantage of the receiver, and in that strictest sense, there are two kinds of grace, sanctifying grace and actual grace.

104. What is sanctifying grace?

Sanctifying grace is that grace which makes the soul holy and pleasing to God.

Sanctifying grace, also called habitual grace, is something inherent in the soul; it does not belong essentially to any nature, not even to the angelic nature. It was given to the angels at the moment of their creation, because they were destined to the vision of God and had to merit their destiny for which sanctifying grace is required; for through supernatural means one merits the supernatural. Adam and Eve were endowed with sanctifying grace, if not at the moment of their creation, at least before their fall, and for the same reason. Our religion teaches us that they lost that precious gift of God for themselves and for their posterity. The effects of sanctifying grace are more easily understood than its nature, and we shall begin with them.

1. The first effect of sanctifying grace is that it makes the soul holy and pleasing to God. Whatever is given by God in view of the merits of Jesus Christ is necessarily good, and exceeds all good and desirable things of the created world, whether material or spiritual. Sanctifying grace, which bestows holiness and justification, makes the soul pleasing to God, because it is a participation in God's nature; and justification differs from habitual grace and holiness, only in that it supposes that man was, before his justification, deprived of holiness and

grace. Hence the Blessed Virgin and Christ our Lord could not be strictly called justified.

2. Adam and Eve lost their original innocence and justice through their sin, and lost it for their descendants. But original sin and all actual sins incompatible with holiness, i. e.., mortal sins, are forgiven when habitual grace is poured into the soul. Our justification does not only imply that sin is no more imputed to us, as Calvin maintained, but implies also that grace and the charity of God is poured forth into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, "Who is given to us," (Rom. v. 5; Cfr. Council of Trent, Sess. 6, Can. 11) so that "We put on the new man who according to God is created in justice and holiness of truth." (Ephes. iv. 24).

3. Through grace the right to the inheritance of heaven is restored to sinners, for they become, through a participation of the divine nature, the adopted sons of God. (1 John iii. 1; 2 Pet. ii. 4; Trent, Sess. 6, Can. 24). Hence St. Paul exhorts us "to give thanks to the Father Who has made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we have redemption through His blood and remission of sins." (Col. i. 12-14).

4. The theological virtues, the supernatural moral virtues, viz., prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, all other moral virtues springing from these, and finally the gifts of the Holy Ghost (Is. xi. 2) are infused into the soul with sanctifying grace.

5. Grace is also an indispensable means to acquire new graces and merits, as well as to satisfy for the temporal punishment due to sin. (Trent, Sess. 6, Ch. 16). We are taught that sanctifying grace is identical with holiness and that it is inherent in the soul. Therefore it is called habitual grace to distinguish it from actual grace; because it remains in the soul, until mortal sin robs the soul of this greatest of God's gifts to His children on earth. But what is the nature of that habitual grace we prize so much? In what does it consist? "The grace of justification," says the Roman Catechism, "which signs us with the Holy Spirit of promise, Who is the pledge of our inheritance, transcends His highest gifts: it unites us to God in the choicest bonds of love; it lights up within us the sacred flames of piety, forms us to newness of life, renders us partakers of the divine nature and enables us to be called and to be in reality the sons of God." (Cf. Ephes. i. 13). St. Thomas (I. 2, q. 110) says first that sanctifying grace puts something real into the soul, and the reason is that we are not justified by the extrinsic love and favor of God, as Calvin maintained, but the love of God towards us pours some real good into the soul. That something good and supernatural is, according to the Angelic Doctor, a quality of

the soul, which is inherent in the soul and differs totally from that grace by which man is moved by God to know, to will or to act. Therefore, while the latter grace is transitory, sanctifying grace is inherent and remains in the soul. Is habitual grace a virtue? St. Augustine says that grace precedes charity and therefore they cannot be identical; hence St. Thomas endeavors to prove that they are different, but charity proceeds from and accompanies habitual grace; when one is lost the other is lost and both will endure in the elect for all eternity, for sanctifying grace is a participation in the divine nature: "By Whom He (Christ) has given us most great and precious promises, that by these you may be partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter i. 4). Virtues dispose us for the supernatural order, i. e., towards the participation in the divine nature, but they are not the participation in the divine nature itself; for, as the natural light of reason differs from the acquired virtues, so likewise the supernatural light of grace, or the gift of grace, is something besides the infused virtues, which are given us to follow the lead of the divine light of grace.

It is evident that we cannot understand in what sanctifying grace essentially consists, as we cannot see or understand in this world the divine nature; neither can we understand what it means to participate in the divine nature. Hence we cannot prize that precious gift too much, and we should rather lose all things, fortune, honor, and even life iself, rather than expose ourselves to the danger of losing the choicest of God's gifts. We should, besides, try by all means in our power to merit more abundant graces, to increase them and fortify them by the practice of all the virtues of our state of life. May the sinner likewise understand what he has lost for a vile satisfaction or for a momentary pleasure!

105. What do you call those graces or gifts of God by which we believe in Him, hope in Him and love Him?

Those graces or gifts of God by which we believe in Him, and hope in Him, and love Him are called the divine virtues of faith, hope and charity.

These virtues are also called theological virtues from the Greek "Theos" (God) and "logos" (speech, word, reference), because they are infused into our souls with sanctifying grace,

are a free gift of God, have God for their immediate object. We believe in God, hope in God and love God. The moral virtues, although ultimately tending to God, have for an object the practice of what God has commanded or counseled; such are the four cardinal virtues and the moral virtues depending on them, the evangelical counsels, chastity, poverty and obedience, etc. The moral virtues are also infused into the soul with sanctifying grace together with the gifts of the Holy Ghost; but they could not exist in the soul without the theological virtues. All virtues have their source and perfection in the three divine virtues and are quickened, conserved and perfected by them.

The theological virtues may be better understood if we consider each of them as a supernatural habit or fitness to elicit corresponding acts of faith, hope and charity. But we must not understand that after receiving habitual grace and the infused virtues together with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, that we are thereby enabled to act without a prevenient or predisposing actual grace that enlightens the mind and moves the will. Our body has the faculty to walk, but if the soul does not move the body, the body remains inactive. It is not wholly a parallel case, because the soul is the mistress of the body, whilst we can resist the graces of God. Yet it is sufficient to make us understand that the infused virtues would remain dormant in the soul unless the Holy Ghost by actual graces influenced the intellect and will to act. This must be especially understood when in the following numbers we will treat of the powerful influence which the virtues of faith, hope and charity exert on our souls.

106. What is faith?

Faith is a divine virtue by which we firmly believe all that God has revealed and the Church proposes to our belief.

Several things are taught us in this answer: a) Faith comes to us from God and has God for its direct object, and therefore it is called divine. It is moreover a gift of God, because all our efforts cannot merit it; therefore it is also a gratuitous gift; it is a virtue and

not an act of faith. By the virtue we mean an inclination or disposition to believe what has been revealed which induces us to make acts of faith when occasion arises. How does the divine gift of faith influence our intellect and our will? First, it acts as a light that illuminates our intellect to see clearly that revealed truth is worthy of our belief and must be believed, even if it contain the deepest mystery; but, moreover, it inclines and disposes our will to accept as undeniable truth all that God has revealed.

In the answer to "what is faith," we are also taught that we must firmly believe; i. e., with a firm conviction that excludes doubt or hesitation; and that conviction reposes upon the absolute certainty that God cannot deceive us nor be deceived. No sane man can come to any other conclusion when he knows that a truth is really revealed by God. But how shall we know that any particular truth is really revealed by God. The definition above teaches us this by saying "and the Church proposes to our belief." This is required in view of the fact that God makes known to us the truths of revelation only indirectly; i. e., through the Church; for He has appointed the Church to teach them to us, and hence it becomes self-evident that all revealed truth must be proposed to our belief by the Church. This is clear from the words of our Saviour when He commissioned His Apostles to preach the Gospel to all nations: "Going therefore teach, etc." If God has commissioned the Church to teach us, it is certainly not with the mind and intention to mislead us, and since He Himself cannot deceive nor be deceived, the Church, the instrument He employs to teach us, must also be free from error and incapable of deceiving us, or in other words, it must be an infallible Church. Now, it is an undeniable fact that Christ has not only authorized the Church to teach us, but that He has made her infallible. The strongest and clearest human testimony leaves no doubt on this subject: Holy Scripture, Tradition and the constant

teaching of the Church herself, bear ample testimony to these facts. (See No. 114 to 135, Lesson 11 and 12 of this High School Catechism).

107. What is hope?

Hope is a divine virtue by which we firmly trust that God will give us eternal life and the help necessary to attain it.

Hope, like faith, is divine, for to have a firm hope of reaching a supernatural destiny, supernatural aid is required; there must be a proportion between the means and the end. Besides, it also has God for a direct object.

In what does this virtue consist? Like faith, it is infused by God into our souls: it is a virtue or an inclination to trust in God and therefore it acts upon our will by predisposing us to desire what God has promised, and to trust Him that He will faithfully keep His promises. Faith, being a light, teaches us what God has promised and by the same light it convinces us that what we hope for is desirable or worthy of our hope. Then the virtue of hope inclines us and moves our will to desire what God has promised, and being besides enlightened as to God's goodness, omnipotence and His fidelity in keeping His promises, we firmly trust that God will fulfill His promises, and will help us to reach the good things promised us by granting us all the supernatural aid we need by means of prayer, the Sacraments, the Holy Sacrifice, the practice of the virtues of our state of life, the keeping of the Commandments, etc.

It is not enough that the virtue of hope should incline us to trust in God for the fulfillment of His promise; but it is also indispensable that God should aid us in directing our efforts towards the good things He has promised; for, although He created us without our aid, He will not save us without it. This aid from God is twofold: first, it removes the obstacles, and

secondly, it helps us to shape our conduct towards the end in view. The principal obstacle is mortal sin, and therefore we trust that God will forgive our past sins, if we detest them heartily and use the means instituted by Him to blot them out. Moreover, we trust that God will aid us in leading good lives by employing all the means which He has placed at our disposal and which are indispensable to serve God properly all the days of our life.

That help of God, as well as eternal life itself is the object of our hope.

Finally, we are taught in the definition of hope, that we must trust firmly. By this we mean that our trust should be such that nothing can shake or weaken it; it also excludes all mistrust. Still, on our part, we can never be absolutely certain that we shall be saved; nay, we must work out our salvation in fear and trembling; and why? Because we may not co-operate with God's designs concerning us. We are sure that God will give us eternal life and all the aid necessary to attain it provided we deserve it; but shall we always faithfully co-operate with God's graces? We are not allowed to mistrust God, but we should mistrust ourselves. We trust in God, because He is infinitely good, omnipotent and infinitely trustworthy, but the sad experiences of our past lives and, the lives of others as well, teach us that mistrust in ourselves must go hand in hand with our firm trust in God.

108. What is charity?

Charity is a divine virtue by which we love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

Charity, as a virtue, is infused into the soul with sanctifying grace, and is a habit or inclination of the soul that moves it to make acts of love of God and of neighbor; but to make these acts a further actual grace is required. The habit of the virtue of charity is some-

what akin to the body's power of motion. A healthy body is able to move and, if not fatigued or otherwise prevented, is inclined thereto. There may be a good reason to make it move, and notwithstanding it will not move until the will determines that it shall. In a like manner, charity gives the power and a certain inclination, but actual grace supplies the reason and the necessary but gentle impulse, and the soul co-operating with grace, determines upon the act of the love of God or of one's neighbor for His sake.

Acts of love need not necessarily be expressed in words or manifested by deeds. Interior affections, such as we experience in meditating on God's infinite goodness or on any of His attributes, or on His goodness towards us, and sincere sentiments of adoration, praise and gratitude, of complacency in His incomprehensible beauty, wisdom, power and majesty, etc., are real acts of love; for, although principally the intellect with the memory seems to operate in all those sentiments and affections, the will, being necessarily moved to what the intellect judges to be good, beautiful and adorable, has its share in all those operations of the soul.

Charity is a divine virtue, for God alone can infuse it in the soul, and therefore it is a pure gift of God, which we cannot deserve by any previous merit, or obtain by the natural faculties or powers of the soul. Again, charity is the most eminent of all virtues, whether moral or theological, for all moral virtues regard the actions of men, that are commanded or counselled by God. By faith, we believe the truths revealed by Him; by the virtue of hope, we trust in His promises concerning eternal life and the means to obtain it; by charity we are united to God by a mutual love, that assures a more perfect union hereafter in the possession of Him during an endless eternity.

Unlike faith and hope, charity is lost through mortal sin, but it is restored to the soul with sanctifying grace, when mortal sin is forgiven.

St. Thomas teaches that with sanctifying grace and charity the Holy Ghost dwells in the soul of the just. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 43, a. 3). This doctrine conforms to the teachings of St. Paul, who says that "the charity of God is poured in our hearts by the

Holy Ghost, Who is given to us" (Rom. v. 5); and the Angelic Doctor explains further that sanctifying grace disposes the soul for the reception of the Holy Ghost. (Ibid. to 2). Thus, with sanctifying grace, charity is infused in the soul, and the Holy Spirit, having made the soul a tabernacle for Himself, comes and dwells therein.

The catechism, in the answer, says that charity is a divine virtue by which we love God; now, in what consists this love? What do we love in God? We love in God His infinite perfections, His nature and all that He is. Faith represents to us a God infinitely amiable and surpassing in an infinite degree what we find of amiability in all the creatures of heaven or on earth, or that in our imagination we represent to ourselves as possible or realizable. He possesses all perfections. He is omnipotent, infinitely good, beautiful and wise; His majesty, immensity and grandeur know no bounds; He is sovereignly independent and happy; as He is, so He was and always will be. Aided by the grace of God, we rejoice that God possesses all these infinite perfections, and as we love Him above all things, our predilection for Him gains by our knowledge of our inferiority, or rather of our nothingness. We learn to esteem God more than all things, even more than ourselves, and the joy we gain from the knowledge of God's infinite attributes increases with the conviction that He, Who is so infinitely amiable, is not a stranger to us: He is our Father and we His children, and His goodness towards us cannot be understood by us any more than His infinite amiability. If we measure the goodness of God by the excellence of His gifts, it is truly infinite, for He offers Himself as our reward for all eternity.

The perfect love of God also includes that benevolence by which we wish Him all that He wishes for Himself, i. e., subjection, obedience and worship of man, who is free to serve Him or not. This benevolence stimulates us in the practice of every virtue, but also fills us with a holy desire to bring others, as far as we can, to the knowledge and service of God.

How shall we prove that we love God? By keeping His commandments, and by doing His will in all things.

We will love Him above all things, if we love Him more than anything created, more than ourselves, even more than our lives, preferring to suffer all evils, even death itself, rather than to offend Him by a mortal sin.

Finally, the virtue of charity leads us to love our neighbor as ourselves for God's sake, that is, neither for our neighbor's sake or because we find in him something naturally amiable; nor for our own sake, that is, because we expect a return of love or some other favor from him. Faith teaches us that God loves our neighbor as well as ourselves. We all are His children, and as He created our neighbor and destined him to the same happiness with ourselves, God necessarily demands that as He loves us, we likewise ought to love every one of our fellow-men. What God has done to save us from sin and Hell, He has done for all people. This explains how we must and can love those that hate us or have done us any injury.

Perfect and Imperfect Charity. Perfect charity is that by which we love God for His own sake, as explained above; and imperfect charity is that by which we love God not precisely because He is amiable in Himself, infinitely perfect and worthy of all our love, but because God is good to us and therefore worthy of our love of gratitude. Perfect charity and mortal sin cannot exist together in the soul. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 24, a. 12). Imperfect charity supposes the consciousness of our creation, our redemption by Christ's precious blood and our eternal destiny; and these truths will never cease to be an inexhaustible source from which to draw sentiments of love, gratitude, worship and devotedness. These supernatural sentiments create in us a sincere love of God which, if ardent, may silence in us all self-love, or at least surpass by its ardor all considerations of our own welfare. This was the charity of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul, when he said that he wished to be anathema for the sake of Christ. St. Paul's charity was certainly perfect; and so we can see that

imperfect charity will become perfect when it is moved by the consideration of God's goodness in Himself or goodness by nature. He who is so good to us, must by nature be good, and if we add to that idea of goodness the idea of supreme and infinite, although we may not fully understand it, together with the consideration and conviction that God is worthy to be loved above all things for His own sake, that love which at first was imperfect has now become perfect.

Must we then expel from our mind and heart all love of gratitude or the love of God for our sake? No, for imperfect love may lead to the acquisition of the most perfect love, and if God has made us hope for eternal happiness by His promise of it, there can be no imperfection in joining the desire of our eternal welfare and of other spiritual and temporal goods to the love of God for His sake, provided our love of God be supreme or greater than any other lawful love. This true love of God also includes hatred of mortal sin, which we know to be destructive of all expectation of eternal welfare, and which God hates and detests. But in this detestation of sin, the motive of our hatred of what displeases God, must be paramount and superior to any other consideration. Otherwise, although our sorrow and contrition for having offended God might be sincere, it would be imperfect. We should then principally detest sin because sin displeases the all-holy God Who is worthy of all our love, and in this manner we join perfect contrition to the perfect love of God.

As a conclusion we will say that the divine virtues, of faith, hope and charity, called also theological virtues, because they are infused into us by God and have God for their immediate object, surpass all other virtues in excellence, yea, no other virtue can exist in us without them. Logically considered, faith is the foundation of our perfection and holiness, for we cannot hope for, strive for, or love what we do not know; but charity is the perfection of all virtues whether theological or moral, for charity tends to our union with God, and tends to make us more and more like God. As a necessary consequence, charity also brings us love from God in return, and establishes a real friendship between God and us. "Now there remains faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of them is charity." Finally, charity alone of the three theological virtues will endure in the elect in heaven, for faith will cease when we see God face to face; hope cannot exist together with the secure enjoyment of what we hoped for; but charity will remain in the participation of the divine love, by which God loves Himself.

109. What is actual grace?

Actual grace is that help of God, which enlightens our mind and moves our will to shun evil and do good.

This grace is transient, and differs widely from the grace of justification or habitual grace. It is called actual, because it gives us aid to perform supernatural acts tending to our salvation, and because it does not abide in the soul like habitual grace. Actual grace is at all times necessary to perform any supernatural good or meritorious act, even when we are in the state of sanctifying grace. This is the doctrine of the Church clearly taught in the Council of Orange. (Chap. 7, 9). The Council of Trent (Sess. 6, Can. 23) teaches the same doctrine, and Holy Scripture is also clear on the subject: "Without Me you can do nothing" says the Lord, that is, nothing that tends to our supernatural welfare. (John xv. 5). This necessity is general, without restriction to any particular grace; although from the context of that passage we infer mainly the need of sanctifying grace to produce meritorious works, since Christ compares Himself to a vine and the Apostles to the branches, which take their life from the vine. St. Paul assures us "that we are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God." (2 Cor. iii. 5). St. Paul evidently speaks here of supernatural good thoughts which supplement our good actions, and which no one can have without God's grace. The Apostle says again: "It is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will," (Phil. ii. 13), and the Council of Orange (Chap. 9) expresses the same truth when it says that "whenever we perform good works, it is God who worketh in us and with us so that we may work," i. e., do whatever God judges good and salutary for us.

It is the impossibility of rising above our natural aspirations, our natural inclinations and our temporal welfare, that makes supernatural aid necessary for us to perform virtuous works and to shun evil; and these conditions of our nature are still farther vitiated by original sin. To perform natural acts conducing to our temporal welfare, the faculties of the body and of the

soul, which God has given us, are sufficient, although even in such cases we often make grievous blunders; but when there is question of the operations of the intellect and will that tend towards our union with God, which is entirely above our natural powers, supernatural aid is required, not only to begin, but to continue and terminate any supernatural work or deed. We are like children unable to walk, whom a benignant father takes by the hand and leads whithersoever he pleases, but only with their co-operation; and if one should say that after justification habitual grace gives the faculty to raise one's self above natural aspiration, and to undertake good works, I will answer that in that case one is like a blind man who cannot know in what direction he must go, or where danger lurks. He must be made to see at least in part, as well as to will; and he must co-operate with his leader. (Cfr. Wilmer's Handbook).

We said that our inability to rise above the natural powers of the soul is still further weakened or vitiated through original sin; for we cannot say that we are indifferent to good or evil; in as much as we are rather more inclined to evil than to good: our passions and the concupiscence of the flesh are such that we resist them only by great efforts. The order of original justice is reversed, the passions are no longer subject to reason, or reason to God. The passions rather blind our reason and weaken our will, and are too often the victors in the struggle for salvation. This is especially true with respect to the grace of perseverance, for which a special grace is required according to the Apostle's express doctrine: "He who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it unto the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 6).

110. Is grace necessary for salvation?

Grace is necessary for salvation, for without it we can do nothing to merit heaven.

Both sanctifying grace and actual grace are necessary to merit heaven. Sanctifying grace is necessary unto salvation, because sinners must first be justified and be holy before they can enter heaven. They become children of God and heirs of heaven through justification, as we have seen; and in order that anyone may become holy after sin, actual grace is also required together with the sinner's co-operation and recourse to the means of regeneration established by Christ, viz., Baptism with faith and sorrow for sin, for those who never were baptized, and the Sacrament of Penance with the proper dispositions, for all those who have fallen into

mortal sin after their Baptism. Finally, to preserve justice and sanctity, we must constantly be helped by God's grace in order that we may be preserved from the dangers to our salvation which surround us on all sides. (Cfr. No. 112).

We should explain here what it means to merit heaven. Can we merit heaven? There are two kinds of merit: a condign merit and a congruous merit. A condign merit is a merit that is deserved, or belongs by right to our good deeds; and the merit of congruity is one that is not strictly deserved, but in which there is a certain propriety, or fitness or suitableness. An example will elucidate the distinction. The sinner may ask of God the grace of conversion. Strictly speaking, God does not owe him the grace of true repentance and of conversion, for since he is in the state of mortal sin and in enmity with God, he cannot merit any condign or rightful reward; he may even distribute all his goods to the poor, but if he lacks charity or habitual grace, which always go together, his good deeds profit him nothing. (1 Cor. xiii. 3). Nevertheless, who cannot see that there is a certain congruity in granting the petition which the good Lord will do by enlightening his mind, i. e., by showing him the heinousness of sin or the malice of his ingratitude towards his Maker, or the danger of his state with regard to eternity; and that supernatural light may move his will to seek reconciliation with God. If this sinner follows the first movement of grace, it will probably lead to his conversion. If, on the other hand, a person in the state of grace asks a favor of God, or performs any good work from a supernatural motive, he is sure to be heard. God owes him a reward, an increase of grace in this life, and, if he continues in charity, after his death an increase of glory in heaven. Why does God owe it? Simply because He promised it: "Ask and you shall receive." (Mat. vii. 7, 8; John xvi. 23, 24). "A drop of water given in His name shall not lose its reward," (Mat. x. 42). Those that are reviled for His sake, He bids rejoice, because their reward shall be very great in heaven. (Mat. v. 12). For that reason we are so often exhorted by Christ and His Apostles to make sure of our salvation by good works. The Council of Trent in a few words condenses the doctrine of the Church, and condemns the heretics of the sixteenth century who taught that to preach the necessity of good works for salvation is to depreciate the merits of Jesus Christ. It anathematizes him who says "that the good works of the just man are the gifts of God only and not his merits," or "that the just man does not truly merit an increase of grace, eternal life and the attainment of eternal life by the good works he performs through Jesus Christ, the grace of God and the merits of Jesus Christ, whose living member he is." (Trent, Sess. 6, Can. 23).

111. Can we resist the grace of God?

We can and unfortunately often do resist the grace of God.

This answer is so self-evident, that it would not require any further explanation, if the heretics of the so-called Reformation, Luther, Calvin and their disciples, had not exaggerated the efficacy of grace so as to destroy man's liberty in obeying or resisting the grace of God.

Baius and Jansenius also broached errors similar to those of Luther and Calvin, but they retracted their errors and they died in communion with the Church. Calvin taught that we cannot resist the grace of God, and tried to prove it from the text cited above, that "we are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God." (2 Cor. iii. 5). He concluded from the text that on account of Adam's sin, no strength is left in the will to employ towards works of grace, but that all our sufficiency, i. e., all power, efforts and deeds belong to grace alone. The interpretation is erroneous and false, for the Apostle only teaches that free-will by itself is not sufficient. He does not say that man has no power or strength whatever. Man's insufficiency of will-power, becomes sufficient with the aid grace offers him. Thus a convalescent, beginning to recover his strength, has not the power to walk alone, but if he is raised on his feet, helped and supported, he receives the beginning of motion from his attendants, as well as continued aid in his movements, but he could not walk without his personal effort or co-operation.

The Council of Orange (A. D. 529), already cited, gives the true interpretation of the text, when it says that "we are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves, i. e., anything good which concerns faith, merit, grace and eternal salvation. . . . And if no one by himself is able to have such thoughts much less can he perform (anything good)." (Can. 7).

The same Council also condemned the errors of the Semi-Pelagians, who held that the beginning of faith and salvation originates with us, if we properly use our free-will, and that all other means of grace are not refused by God to those, who, according to His foreknowledge, will make good use of them. This false doctrine was an outcome of the heresy of the lay-monk Pelagius and another monk Celestius, fraudulently ordained, who taught that man, not being corrupted by original sin, had no need of grace for acts tending to his salvation. Various councils in the Church of Africa condemned the Pelagians, and Pope Innocent in 417 added his authority to their decisions, but the Semi-Pelagians were condemned only when Pope Felix IV (A. D.

529) sent to the Council of Orange some decrees relating to grace to be published by it. Thus we see that the Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians erred in under-estimating the power and necessity of grace, and extolled above measure the natural force of free-will, whilst Calvin and also Luther adopted the opposite extreme by destroying free-will and by attributing to grace an irresistible power. Long before Luther and Calvin, St. Thomas (P. I, q. 62, a. 3 to 2) gave the reason, why we can resist the graces of God. See here his argument, reduced to a simple form: Grace is a faculty superadded to the soul to act with according to its nature, as walking is a faculty of the body; and hence it leaves the intellectual powers of the soul, i. e., intellect and will, intact, and when the soul acts, it acts freely, and the inclination coming from grace imposes no necessity on the soul, for he that receives the grace may or may not use it, i. e., may or may not follow the inclination or gentle impulse which grace bestows. It is a dogma of our faith, that we can resist the grace of God, and to teach otherwise would be to deny free-will, by denying to man the power to merit or demerit, which is equivalent to making man irresponsible for his actions. The Council of Trent (Sess. 6, Can. 53) speaking of the preparation of adults for justification, after declaring that justification is due to the prevenient grace of God, adds the following: "When God touches the heart of man by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, neither is man himself utterly without doing anything, when he receives that inspiration, in as much as he is able to neglect it. . . . Whence, when it is said in the Sacred Writings, (Zach. iii) 'Turn ye to Me and I will turn to thee,' we are reminded of our liberty, i. e., to reject or accept the inspiration." Compare with the foregoing also Can. 4: "If any one say that man's free-will, moved and excited by God, cannot refuse its consent, if it would, . . . let him be anathema." St. Stephen (Acts vii. 51) addressed the unbelieving Jews in the following manner: "You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do you also." It is useless to adduce the testimony of many of the Fathers, for Calvin himself admitted that his doctrine on grace was contrary to what had been taught and believed during many centuries before his time. But someone may object that all those citations from Scripture refer to sufficient grace and not to efficacious graces; for efficacious graces, as such, always cause assent, and hence the assent is necessary; while sufficient grace can be resisted, and in fact he that receives a merely sufficient grace never co-operates with it. Before answering the objection let us first understand what is meant by an efficacious and a sufficient grace. If we call a sufficient grace one which the recipient freely resists, and an efficacious grace one with which he freely co-operates, then,

when these graces are given by God, they are both in reality efficiacious; but the former becomes sufficient only through the resistance of him that receives it. In this case there is no intrinsic difference between an efficacious grace and a sufficient grace, and every one of our citations proves the doctrine of the Church.

God can give, if He chooses, extraordinary graces to one person and not to another, as we know that He has done with Abraham, Moses, St. John the Baptist, St. Paul and hundreds of others. Such extraordinary callings are not the ordinary ways of Providence, and those favored by such graces may have been chosen as special instruments in God's greatest designs for the spiritual welfare of many. In such cases we should concede that the graces bestowed upon such men, were intrinsically efficacious, so that God not only foreknew but foreordained that His chosen favorites would not resist His graces; but even in these cases and similar ones, grace does not destroy free-will; for God has a thousand ways to make the recipient of efficacious graces co-operate freely without compulsion or force. St. Paul (2 Cor. vi. 1) writes: "And we helping to exhort you, that you receive not the grace of God in vain." Why would St. Paul exhort his hearers, if they could not resist the grace of God? St. John Chrysostom asserts and explains the necessity of free-will in all graces, when he says: "God has not the custom to make people work through force and necessity, nor is His election violent but persuasive. We can easily understand that He does not impose His calling, from the fact that many who are called are lost. Therefore it is in our power to save ourselves or to be lost." From Holy Scripture (Eccli. xxxi. 8-16), it is evident that the so-called efficacious graces would have been ineffective from lack of co-operation in the recipient. In the text there is question of a "rich man that is found without blemish and has done wonderful things." Certainly he must have received extraordinary graces to be made perfect and to have glory everlasting; and still he is praised because "he that could have transgressed hath not transgressed and could do evil things and hath not done them."

The parable of the marriage feast (Mat. xxii. 2-14) corroborates the same truth. Many were called who excused themselves; others were called and they again neglected the invitation; finally all classes were called, good and bad. . . . and our Lord concluded by saying: "Many are called but few are chosen." Why did not all accept His invitation? Were not all equally called? Why were not all equally chosen? There can be no other reason than that some were of good disposition and some were not; some accepted the invitation and others as freely rejected it. Christ apostrophizes Jerusalem, the Holy City, as follows:

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not?" (Mat. xxiii. 37). Let us remember that Jerusalem was the city over whose future destruction Christ had wept, and now predicted her desolation. How often did our Lord call the people of His favored city by internal and external graces!

A last truth which the doctrine on grace teaches us is that Christ our Lord died for all men, and therefore desires that all should be saved; and since no one can save himself without God's grace, we must naturally conclude that God gives to all people without exception sufficient supernatural aid and help to reach their eternal destiny. We may call that supernatural aid sufficient grace, provided we admit that each individual can if he so choose, work out his salvation by co-operating with God's grace; it must be truly sufficient, and as man is free, some will resist it and lose their souls, and others will co-operate with it and be saved. All are called, but this call, according to our quotation from St. Chrysostom, forces no one, nor does God impose His call by constraining anyone; He leaves each one free, and it is in the power of each individual person to save himself or to be lost. As we are not God's counselors, we do not care to investigate when He gives, strictly speaking, efficacious graces which He purposes to be efficacious. Who will deny His power? But we should sincerely believe that He grants even to unbelievers and sinners sufficient graces for their salvation, and if such graces are not efficacious, it is not due to the insufficiency of the graces, but to the resistance of the recipient, or to his lack of co-operation.

112. What is the grace of perseverance?

The grace of perseverance is a particular gift of God, which enables us to continue in the state of grace until death.

The catechism here speaks of a special help of God by which those that are justified are confirmed in grace, and persevere therein until the end of their lives; and therefore that particular help is called the grace of final perseverance.

The Semi-Pelagians held that man by his own free will is able to persevere to the end in the grace of God, and this opinion the Second Council of Orange condemned as heretical. The Semi-Pelagian doctrine was revived by some of the heretics of

the sixteenth century, and it was again condemned by the Council of Trent. "If anyone say that he will for certain, of an absolute and infallible certainty, have that great gift of perseverance unto the end, unless he have learned it by special revelation, let him be anathema." (Trent, Sess. 6, Can. 16). Again: "If anyone say that the just man is able, without the special help of God, to persevere in the justice received, or that, with that help he is not able, let him be anathema." (Ibid. Can. 22). We infer from these two Canons that God has sometimes granted the gift of perseverance, i. e., the gift to remain in the state of grace until death, and from Canon 23 we learn that the Church holds that the Blessed Virgin received a special privilege to avoid not only all mortal sins but even all venial sins. Although it is not an article of faith, it is also commonly taught that the Apostles received the gift of perseverance on Pentecost Day.

It is certain that to persevere in the state of grace until death cannot be attributed to our sole efforts, as the Semi-Pelagians maintained, saying that the beginning and the end of justification is the fruit of man's free will, and solely depends on him. Holy Scripture as well as the Council of Trent teaches the same doctrine. St. Paul (Phil. i. 6) says: "He who began anew the good work will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus," i. e., until the day when Christ will judge us at the moment of our death. Hence the beginning of our justification as well as our final perseverance is due to God's goodness. Does our own experience and our reason not teach the same truth? Our evil inclinations, and the many temptations that we experience from within and from without, are sufficient witnesses that we could not for any length of time remain in the state of grace without God's help; "Wherefore he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall. Let no temptation take hold of you, but such as is human. And God is faithful Who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. x. 12, 13); and again, "The help of God is to be implored even by the regenerate and the holy, so that they may arrive at the good end, or persevere in the good work." (Second Council of Orange, Can. 10).

We cannot merit the special gift of perseverance; but through prayer, good works and the strict observance of all the duties of our state of life, we may confidently expect it from God. So doing, we shall follow the admonition of St. Peter when he says: "Wherefore, brethren, labor the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election." (2 Peter i. 10).

LESSON THE ELEVENTH

ON THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

Since it was not suitable that Christ should remain upon earth, (No. 90) we can safely conclude that Christ provided for the spiritual welfare of all future generations; especially so, if we consider that Christ died for all men, in order that He might save all who desire to participate in the merits of His passion and death. We have seen in the last lesson that man participates in the merits of the Saviour through sanctifying and actual graces of the Holy Ghost, Who bestowed them abundantly on the Apostles and the Disciples on Pentecost Day. Now we naturally inquire further how those graces are communicated to us. We have learned that faith is necessary to salvation, and faith comes by hearing. Is there any person or organization of persons who can transmit the doctrine of Christ and speak in His name? To whom is the deposit of faith, i. e., all Christ has taught, confided? Who is to continue the mission of Christ upon earth?

Moses, the Prophet and Lawgiver, produced the tables of the Law, written by the hand of God, and wrote down with minute details what had to be observed in the public worship, in the government of the nation, and in its relation with other nations. Laws and their sanctions with the power to enforce them were all clearly drawn up. Mohammed claimed also to be a prophet of God, and he produced the Koran, written, by God, as he alleged, to serve for the instruction or guidance of his people. Did Christ also leave behind a code of laws for our instruction, to which we might have recourse at all times? We have nothing of the kind from the Founder of the Christian Religion. Both before and after His Resurrection, He instructed His Apostles and disciples in all that regards the salvation of souls. When the time, appointed by the Father for the Saviour to leave this world, had come, He ascended into heaven; but not before He ordered His Apostles to preach salvation to all nations, and to await in Jerusalem the coming of the Holy Ghost. The existence of an organization among the preachers of the Gospel, sent by Christ, and the faithful, if any, places upon us the duty of learning the prerogatives of such organization in all matters relating to our eternal welfare. Again, we shall see later that the principal and surest means of grace, which communicate to us the merits of Jesus Christ, are the Sacraments instituted by Him, i. e., certain outward signs to be observed with internal dispositions of the soul; to whom did Christ commit the custody and dispensation of those sources of grace?

We will now see that the deposit of faith, i. e., all that Christ taught, including what He commanded to be observed and the dispensation of all the visible means of grace, were left to an organization, a religious body, which is invested with divine authority to continue His mission of saving souls until the end of time: that organization instituted by Christ we call the Catholic Church.

"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." (Apostles' Creed).

113. What is the Catholic Church?

The Catholic Church is the congregation of all those who profess the faith of Christ, partake of the same Sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors under one visible head.

Every well-organized society has three constituent parts: 1. the members banded together; 2. the object in view; 3. its constitution and laws, with the power to maintain and execute them and to rule over the organization.

If we wish to investigate the advantages of belonging to any particular organization, we necessarily find out who can become a member, if he is not born a member, as in the case of national or state organizations; and thereafter we weigh the advantages and study the object the society has in view, in order to understand the advantages accruing from membership; we likewise ascertain the obligations attached to it, by carefully investigating its constitution and other laws binding upon the members; and finally we find out, in whom the power to execute the constitution and laws is vested.

1. As to the membership in the Church of God, we shall see later that only those who are baptized or desire Baptism can be members of the Church. This is clear from the aim or object of this Christian society, which is life everlasting; for Christ has said: "Unless you are baptized with water and the Holy Ghost you cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven." Adults when baptized must believe what Christ has taught, for without faith it is impossible to please God; and they must also profess the faith of Christ, for faith without good works is dead.

2. The end or purpose in view of the Church's institution, as an organization, is to secure for all its members the highest degree of sanctity compatible with the

designs of God on each individual member, in order that they may obtain, after this life, an eternal reward corresponding to their merits.

3. The constitution and laws that govern the members of the Church have been given to her by her Founder, Christ Jesus, and among them are included also the essential parts of the public worship and of the outward means of grace, viz., the Sacraments. The Saviour has also designated those who shall maintain and carry out the fundamental laws of His Church: they are the Apostles and their successors, for Christ expressly enjoined upon his Apostles to teach all nations whatsoever He had commanded them; He also promised to be with the Apostles until the consummation of the world, thereby including their successors in His promise. (Matt. xxviii. 20).

The Church of Christ, being a perfect society, as has been shown, with the most laudable and holy aim, has also the power to frame additional rules and regulations; but she has not the power to abrogate the fundamental laws and institutions which her Founder has given her and substitute new ones. "He that heareth you heareth Me, he that despiseth you despiseth Me" (Luke x. 16), says the Saviour to those who were to preach in His name. When a dispute arose in the early Church about the obligation of circumcision, the Apostles convened in a council and decided that the duty was not to be imposed on the converts from paganism, and in like manner the Church has, in her councils, decided all matters regarding faith and morals, as well as all matters of importance regarding the government and discipline of the Church.

Finally, Christ has appointed the visible head of the Church, His Vicar, upon earth, who governs the whole Church in His name, and whom all the members of this Christian society must obey as the oracle of Christ.

We now understand the answer to the question of the Catechism: What is the Church? It is a congregation or society in which all the members, being first baptized, profess the faith of

Christ, partake of the same sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors under one visible head. The aim of this Christian society is not expressed in this answer, because it is sufficiently understood; for Christ came upon earth to save all men. Besides, in this answer the catechism mainly teaches us in what the true Church differs from numberless other churches which have claimed to be the true churches of Christ. Thus when the catechism says that the members of the true Church are governed by their lawful superiors under one visible head, it excludes all those who are not in communion with the successor of St. Peter, the legitimate head of the Church; the same conclusion applies to their faith and the Sacraments.

114. Who is the invisible Head of the Church?

Jesus Christ is the invisible Head of the Church.

We have considered the Church, in the preceding number, as a well-regulated society, and, as such, Christ is her Head, even now whilst sitting at the right hand of God, and that for many reasons: Christ is her Founder; His doctrine and commandments lie at the foundation of her existence; His assistance which He promised her, is the life that sustains her; His promises of a future reward keep up the courage of her members in the struggle to attain it; and as He has chosen her as His spouse dear to His Heart, He, like a dutiful and well-beloved Spouse, knows no other love. What a wonderful communication of goods this doctrine unfolds!

Is there anything in common between the Head and His Church? Yes, His life is her life, viz., sanctifying grace, in which all her living members participate. Hence we can truly say that Christ is the life of the Church. All the institutions in the Church are but means to an end, viz., to bestow, maintain and increase the supernatural life in the soul of every member.

The Church is often referred to in Scripture as a sheepfold of which Christ is the supreme Pastor; and the sheep hear His voice, when they follow His doctrine preached by the Apostles and their successors, the bishops of the Catholic Church with the successor of St. Peter at their head. The Church is also referred to as the branches of a vine, in which similitude the branches

represent the living members of the Church and the vine Christ Jesus, Who is their life and nourishment, as long as they remain attached to the vine. The Church is also pointed to as a city built on a hill, because her attributes or marks make her visible far and wide to all those who wish to arrive at the truth; but all cities have a magistrate who directs their temporal affairs. The Church is also referred to as the beloved Spouse of Christ, immaculate and without spot or blemish, on account of the intimate love and affection existing between Christ and the Church. The Church is also likened to an edifice built upon the Apostles as a solid foundation, because they were chosen by Christ to spread His religion throughout the world. Christians are the living stones of that temple, and Christ is, as it were, the cornerstone. (Eph. ii. 22-24). The Church is also called the New Jerusalem, because it is a congregation of people all dear to our Lord. It is also likened to a field of wheat (Mat. xxiii. 24) or to a fisher's net (Ib. 47), because in the Church those that have the faith without any good works may be compared to cockle in a wheatfield or chaff in the wheat, or to bad fishes that are rejected from among the fishes caught in a net. It is Christ Who watches the growth of the wheat and cockle, and will make in due time a proper separation of the good wheat from the chaff and cockle, as well as the good from the bad fishes.

Finally, the Church is called the mystical body of Christ, as "He is the Head of the body, His Church" (Col. i. 18), and this likening the Church to a human body is very striking and full of mystery. There are peculiar reasons why Christ is the Head of the Church, His mystical body. The body and the head have one common life, viz., the grace of God, which Christ as man merited for Himself and for all the members of His mystical body. God, Who is order and loves order, justly made Christ the Head of that body, which He brought forth and whose life He is; for does not the head rule the whole body? The head is also the most perfect part of the body: in it are all the five senses, and in the rest of the body there is only the sense of touch. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 8, a. 1, 2). The living members of the Church participate in some manner in the nature of the God-Man through sanctifying grace; but Christ, is the source of all graces and these like the blood in our veins flow to every member of the mystical body. We might go on and compare the five senses in man with the operations in the mystical body of Christ, and we easily discern how, in matters spiritual, Christ is our sight, our hearing, our speech, our feelings or pious affections of the heart, the delightful sweetness and fragrant odor of sanctity, which we taste and smell; and therefore the mysterious operations of the Holy Ghost in the Church, whose Head Christ is, entitle her to be rightfully called the mystical body of

Christ. (Rom. xii. 4 sq.; 1 Cor. vi. 15; xii. 12 sq.; Eph. iv. 11, 16, and v. 29, 30).

We should not fail to notice that, whilst the Church is called the mystical body of Christ, not every member of that sacred body is equally united to the Head: some may be dead members, like dead or paralyzed limbs of a human body. These are those that are in the state of mortal sin, for mortal sin takes away the life of grace. They are not altogether lost, for although paralyzed and inert, they may receive new life, as long as they are attached to the body. Those members, on the contrary, that are detached from the body through infidelity or obstinate heresy, or who are not in communion with the Church, no more belong, in any sense, to His mystical body, and a miracle of grace is necessary to bring them into membership with Christ. This accounts for the few who are converted from heresy and schism, and it applies also to those who, through wilful obstinacy, have abandoned the Church in which they formerly believed.

The objection might be raised that as Christ is the invisible Head of the Church, she herself must be invisible and hence that she is composed of saintly members only, whom Christ alone knows, since man cannot for certain distinguish the just from the wicked. The answer will be promptly forthcoming when we consider that Christ's Church or the Christian society was to be composed of visible members, and hence the Church of Christ must be visible and easily recognizable.

When Simon Peter had acknowledged Christ to be the Son of the livisg God, the Saviour called Peter a rock, and added. "And on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"; our Lord likewise gave Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven with power to loose and to bind. Evidently, there is question here of an assembly, a congregation or gathering of people, according to the meaning of the Greek word "ecclesia," which primarily signified an assembly of people. Peter could exercise his power of loosing and binding only on visible members who could hear his words of forgiveness. From the signification of an assembly, the transition is natural, to include all people having a common faith or a common interest, as when our Lord speaks of one whose stubbornness demands a public denunciation: "Tell the Church, and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." (Mat. xviii. 17). In the same sense must be understood the reference to the Church of Jerusalem, when St. Luke says: "At that time there was raised a great persecution against the Church which was in Jerusalem." (Acts viii. 1). In Acts xx. 28 St. Luke without doubt uses the word "ecclesia" (church) exactly in the same sense as we use it: for when St. Paul addressed the clergy of Ephesus, he said among other things:

"Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood." Writing to Timothy, St. Paul also employed the word "church" in the same sense: "These things I write to thee . . . . that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth." (1 Tim. iii. 14, 15). These and other citations from Holy Writ as well as many testimonies from the Fathers of the Church prove that by the word "church" we understand that living, visible society, established on earth by Christ, over which the Apostles and their successors, the bishops of the Church, rule to lead all people to salvation.

115. Who is the visible head of the Church?

Our Holy Father, the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the Vicar of Christ on earth and the visible head of the Church.

116. Why is the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, the visible head of the Church?

The Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the visible head of the Church, because he is the successor of St. Peter, whom Christ made the visible head of the Church.

We have seen that the Church is a society established on earth by Christ our Lord, and that it is a visible society composed of living members; now, order requires that the visible Church should have an internal organization to carry out the purposes of its institution. But there can be no perfect organization without a supreme head or a supreme authority. Christ Himself directed the infant Church as long as He was on earth, but now that He left this world for heaven, He must have named some one to represent Him visibly on earth, and to carry out all the dispositions He entrusted to the Apostles; for without that, the Church would be like a house divided against itself and could not stand. The presumption is also strong that there is only one head appointed by Christ to rule over the whole Church, for history as well as daily experience compel us to admit that, although subordinate power may be divided among many,

the supreme power should, for the general good, be confided to one man. Another thing to be noticed is that as Christ is still the invisible Head of the Church, the visible head can be considered only as His vicegerent, i. e., one who executes the will of Christ, the Founder.

The question at issue will be solved by proving that Christ, when on earth, placed one man at the head of the Church and that his successors were invested with a like power and authority. Upon the Apostle Peter the supreme jurisdiction over the whole Church was bestowed by our Lord. We read in Holy Scripture (Mat. xvi. 15-19) that when Christ and His Apostles had arrived at the city of Cesarea Philippi, Jesus asked His Apostles: "But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering said to him: Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father Who is in Heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." Note here that Christ had predicted that Simon would be called "Cephas" or "Rock" (John i. 42), and now He changed Simon's name from Simon, Son of Jona, to Peter, i. e., Rock, for in the Syro-Chaldaic language spoken by the Apostles and our Lord, Simon is called "Cephas" or "Kepha." Hence Christ said: "Thou art Rock and upon that rock I shall build My Church, etc." Why does Christ call Simon, Rock? Because it is upon solid rock or solid foundation that Christ wishes to build His Church, so that she may be able to withstand the impetuous attacks of all her enemies. This indicates that the supreme power of governing the Church was bestowed upon Peter, as the stability of the Church depends on the rock, Peter. This is made clearer still by the fact that Christ, at the same time, gives to Peter, the Rock, the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven with the power to loose and to bind, and assures him that whatever he shall loose or bind on earth will be ratified by God in heaven. Therefore in all that regards the salvation of souls, for which Christ instituted His Church, the decision of Peter is final and without appeal. How senseless the words of Christ would have been if He did not intend to confer on Peter the supreme authority over the whole Church! Note here the solemn occasion, viz., Peter's solemn profession of faith, which our Saviour rewards forthwith; and no one, unless prejudice blinds him, can but acknowledge that

Simon Peter receives in the passage quoted, the supreme jurisdiction to be exercised when Christ shall have left this world. Other passages from Scripture corroborate our conclusion. At the Last Supper, there was a contention between the Apostles regarding the one who should be the greatest among them; our Blessed Lord preached to them a lesson of humility and gave them a well-deserved rebuke, and then He turned to Simon Peter and said: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren." (Luke xxii. 31, *32*). Here we find that our Lord addressed Simon Peter alone among the twelve, and why did our Lord pray for Simon, if not that he might after his denial of his Master and his subsequent conversion, confirm all his brethren in the faith? Christ had just spoken of a kingdom He was founding for them, and in that kingdom Peter had to see to the stability of the faith of all, not excepting the other Apostles.

After the Resurrection Christ appeared to four Apostles, including Peter, and three other disciples. After eating with them, He addressed Himself to Peter alone, and three times He questioned Peter, twice whether he loved Him, and once whether he loved Him more than the others. Peter answered three times: "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee" and twice did the Lord subjoin: "Feed My Lambs," and the last time: "Feed My sheep." (John xxi. 15-17). Is it necessary to explain this passage so that all may grasp its meaning? We think not: everyone can understand that there was question of the fold, of which Christ is the Good Shepherd, and that the lambs are the lowly ones in that fold and the sheep are all the members of the same fold, the Church, not excepting the highest in dignity and authority. Our Lord had already compared the faithful, His followers, to a sheepfold whose solicitous shepherd He is and Who has called others to the fold, so that there shall be but one fold and one shepherd (John xi. 14); and now He commits the care of the sheep to one man, Simon Peter. Need we insist further? The triple denial of Peter is offset and condoned by a triple confession of love. Peter has regained his prerogatives: in the future he will be the firm rock; to him are now finally given the keys of God's kingdom, and as soon as the Good Shepherd ascends to His Father, Peter will immediately take charge of the fold, and all the Apostles will obey his voice. This will be verified in a few days, when a successor to the traitor Judas is to be chosen. (Acts i. 15-26). On the day of Pentecost St. Peter is the first to speak and three thousand Jews are converted. (Ib. ii. 14 sq.). In the Council of Jerusalem in which opinions differ, all give their assent when St. Peter's decision is announced. (Acts xv. 1-12).

We may add that Peter is often named alone, when the other Apostles are mentioned without being named; or if Peter is named with the other Apostles, he is always named first. (Cf. Acts i-xii).

If the scope of this work would permit, we could adduce the testimony of many early Fathers, both Greek and Latin, who interpreted the foregoing texts of Holy Scripture as all Catholics understand them; but for those testimonies we must again refer the student to the excellent work: *The Faith of Our Fathers.* St. Augustine, it is true, was somewhat in doubt about the interpretation of the Greek text in St. Matthew (xvi. 15): "Thou art Peter and upon this rock," but St. Augustine did not understand the Syro-Chaldaic language used by our Saviour and therefore could not grasp the full meaning of the sentence: "Thou art Kepha (rock) and upon this Kepha (rock) I shall build My Church"; nevertheless, if there was any doubt in his mind about the explanation of those words, the learned and holy Doctor agrees with all Catholics that Christ, by the words quoted, conferred on Peter the primacy of the whole Church.

Having proved that Christ placed St. Peter at the head of the whole Church, we must now examine who was his successor, or, what is equivalent, what city can boast of being the capital of Christendom.

The following historical facts, viz., that Peter first established his See in Antioch, that after him St. Ignatius, martyr, occupied the same See, and that Peter himself went to Rome, then the capital of the world, fixed his permanent See in the latter city, and died there a martyr for the faith, are as certain as any other historical events generally believed by all. The chronology of those times is not so clear that it can be determined definitely in what year Peter first arrived in Rome, and in what year he died. The cause of the confusion lies in the fact that when mention is made of St. Peter's arrival in Rome by ecclesiastical writers, it is difficult to ascertain whether such mention refers to his first or to a subsequent coming to the city after an absence on a voyage. St. Jerome tells us that Peter came to Rome the second year after the accession of Claudius to the imperial throne, and that he governed the See of Rome for twenty-five years, or until the last year of Nero's reign.

When there is question of determining who were St. Peter's successors, we should examine how the primitive Church viewed the prerogative attached to the Apostolic See, which Peter's successors inherited. Probably the most precious document that has come down to us on the subject is found in the writings of St. Ireneus, Bishop of Lyons. He was a disciple of St. Polycarp and of Papias, who themselves were disciples of St. John the Evangelist; and consequently his testimony is of the greatest importance, as we are absolutely certain that his doctrine on the prerogatives of Peter's successor is the doctrine of the Apostles. He was sent to Gaul (France) in 157, and having served in the Church of Lyons as a simple priest, he became bishop of that city after the martyrdom of Photinus, his predecessor. He died in 202, himself a martyr for the faith. His treatise against heretics, in five volumes, written in the Greek language, is, indeed, very valuable. The fundamental principle laid down therein is that "all manner of commenting the Holy Scriptures, which does not conform to the constant doctrine of Tradition, is to be rejected." "Although Scripture," he says, "is the immutable rule of our faith, nevertheless, as it does not contain everything and is obscure in many places, recourse is to be had to Tradition, i. e., to the doctrine which Jesus Christ and the Apostles have transmitted to us by word of mouth and which is kept and taught in the churches." See next how the saint establishes the supremacy of the Roman Church over all other churches: "We will confine ourselves," he says, "to citing the tradition of the faith preached to all in the Roman Church, that Church so great, so old, so well-known to all, which the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul have founded and established; this tradition which has come to us through the succession of the bishops, is with us in confounding those who through inclination, through vain-glory, through blindness or through malice form illegitimate assemblies. For it is necessary that all other churches [i. e., the faithful all over the world] should conform themselves to that Church on account of its eminent superiority, because the tradition of the Apostles has always been observed in it by all those who resort there from all parts." He continues in the same strain in another place: "Every particular church must have recourse to it [the Roman Church] as to the faithful depository of the Apostolic Traditions, in order to confound all those who embrace errors through self-love, through vainglory, through blindness or through whatever other motive." Comment is unnecessary: the eminent superiority of the Roman Church which was founded by the Apostles Peter and Paul is fully established by Tradition, and all other churches throughout the world must conform themselves to it. In what must all the churches of the world conform themselves to the Church of Rome? Evidently in faith and in all

the traditions that come from the Apostles; for the Church of Rome, says the learned bishop, has the tradition of faith, which is preached in it, and all the Apostolic traditions have always been known to be kept in it. Even Tertullian, although unwittingly, becomes a valuable witness for us on the subject; for after he had joined the sect of the Montanists, who claimed that for some sins like adultery and fornication, there is no forgiveness, he sneeringly remarked that the Bishop of Bishops was about to issue a decree that even adulterers could be forgiven after doing penance. The inference we draw from this is that the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome, claimed the title of Bishop of Bishops, although Tertullian refers to it tauntingly with a view to offering an insult to Peter's successor.

St. Jerome wrote to Pope Damasus: "I associate myself in communion with your Holiness, i. e., with the Chair of Peter. I know that on that rock the Church has been built. Whosoever shall eat the Lamb outside this house is profane. Whosoever has not entered this ark of Noah shall perish in the deluge." "In the Roman Church," says St. Augustine, "the primacy of the Apostolic See has always abided." St. Athanasius writing to Pope Felix, asserts that the Pope and his predecessors, i. e., the Apostolic Bishops, have been placed at the head of the citadel, and have been commanded to take care of all the churches.

These few extracts from the Fathers of the first centuries of the Church are sufficient; we pass on to the Ecumenical Councils in which the Bishops of Rome always exercised the supreme authority, or were proclaimed in them as endowed with the primacy, not only of honor, but also of jurisdiction over all the other bishops of the world. In all those councils the right to preside was always accorded to the legates of the Pope, although the legates were in other respects often of a lower dignity than many of the bishops present; yea, even simple priests have presided over the councils in which not only archbishops but even patriarchs took part. Sometimes the Popes excluded unworthy bishops from the Council, as was the case with Dioscorus, patriarch of Alexandria, who was excluded by the Pope from the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Nearly all the Ecumenical Councils were convoked by the Popes, and it is certain that the decisions of the Councils had no binding force unless they were approved by the Bishops of Rome. We may add that the Popes of Rome have always claimed and exercised the supremacy over all other bishops of the world; that they decided all cases appealed to them, and absolved those who had been condemned by particular councils or by their local superiors.

The fact that some Asiatic bishops through envy and jealousy or through any other cause, denied the authority and prerogatives of the Roman See, and finally seceded from the unity

of the Church, cannot militate against our argument from tradition: we wish to prove simply that in the beginning of the Christian era and for several centuries thereafter, the prelates of the whole Church recognized the supremacy of the Bishops of Rome until Arianism, Nestorianism and other heresies had broken the unity of faith among the children of the Christian Church. With the exception of a few local troubles all the bishops of the Church until the ninth century owned allegiance to the Church of Rome, and heresy was the forerunner of schism in the Church; i. e., those that fell away from the Church became heretics before becoming schismatics. And what have been the results? Does not the indifference or want of unity or the desolation that reigns within their ranks clearly prove that without a recognized supreme power there can be no real unity in doctrine and government?

117. Who are the successors of the other Apostles?

The successors of the other Apostles are the bishops of the Catholic Church.

In the preceding number we have seen that St. Peter was the visible head of the Christian Church during his lifetime, and that the Bishops of Rome are his successors in all the prerogatives belonging to his Apostolic See. Here the catechism asks who are the successors of the other Apostles. It is evident from Holy Scripture that Christ our Lord chose twelve Apostles, and when Judas the traitor was no more, the Apostles chose Matthias in his place, so as to fill the mystic number of twelve, which represented the twelve tribes of Israel. The Apostolic College was complete when the Holy Ghost descended upon the nascent Church in Jerusalem. After the Apostles separated and preached throughout the world, they, when occasion demanded it, conferred episcopal dignity upon others; thus we see that Paul and Barnabas were chosen Apostles at Antioch and the selection of these two was due to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, Who had said to the Church at Antioch: "Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them." (Acts xiii. 2, 3). When the two had been ordained by the imposition of hands, they went their way and immediately they began

to preach the word of God, and they in turn appointed others in different places for the ministry. They were called "episcopoi" (bishops) and "presbyteroi" (priests, ancients). Besides the twelve Apostles who together received the Holy Ghost on Pentecost Day, only two more, Paul and Barnabas, are properly called Apostles, because these two had been chosen by direct revelation from God. Let it be remarked here that those appointed or chosen by the Apostles to share their ministry were sometimes called indifferently priests or bishops, and even the Apostles were sometimes called priests. At first, while the Apostles went from country to country to fulfill Christ's command of preaching to all nations, they appointed in the cities, where sufficient converts had been made, bishops to rule the particular churches leaving to the bishops themselves, as to Titus and Timothy, the charge to choose their own priests, who were to share the burden of their ministry. Hence it was found necessary to distinguish between simple priests and bishops; and if not during the lifetime of the Apostles, at least soon thereafter—as we learn from the writings of St. Ignatius, who succeeded St. Peter at Antioch—the terms "bishop" and "priest" were clearly distinguished; the latter being given to simple priests who were subject to the bishop's jurisdiction, whilst the former was retained as the name proper to the office of a bishop, i. e., that of overseer, governor, etc., according to the etymology of the Greek word "episcopos."

It is well for us now to prove from Scripture and Tradition that the Apostolic office passed from the Apostles to the bishops of the Church, with this difference, that the Apostles had received from Christ jurisdiction over the whole Church, whilst the jurisdiction of the bishops was limited to some particular place, and they were also subject to the supreme authority of St. Peter's successors and to the decisions of legitimate councils.

St. Paul addressing the priesthood of Ephesus warned the bishops present, saying: "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." Likewise the same Apostle frequently admonished Titus and Timothy, as men who were charged with the care and super-

vision of their respective churches, Crete and Ephesus. Tradition on the subject is abundant, but we must again refer to *Faith of Catholics* for citations from the Fathers of the Church to establish the tradition on the authority of bishops as successors of the Apostles. We will quote however the testimony of the martyred successor of St. Peter in the See of Antioch, St. Ignatius. In his epistle to the Trullians, he writes: "As you are subject to the bishop as to Christ, it appears to me that you live, not like men, but like Christ; . . . it is therefore necessary, as you are doing, that you undertake nothing without the bishop, but be also subject to the presbytery as to the Apostles of Christ." To the Smyrnians he writes: "All of you follow the bishop, as Christ did His Father, and as the presbytery follows the Apostles. . . . Let no one undertake without the bishop any of those things which regard the Church." St. Ignatius extols perhaps above measure the dignity of the bishops and the presbytery; but it shows that the bishops are superior to the whole order of priests and that they have full jurisdiction in all matters ecclesiastical, and that nothing new must be undertaken without their approval. St. Ignatius speaks yet more plainly in the same epistle to the Trullians: "It is fitting," he says, "that each one of you, and you priests in particular, comfort the bishop in honor of the Father of Jesus Christ and of the Apostles."

118. Why did Christ found the Church?

Christ founded the Church to teach, govern, sanctify and save all men.

Christ our Saviour came upon earth to save all men, but not without man's co-operation. He came to teach us and to show us the way to heaven: "I am the way, the truth and the light," (John iv. 6) said Our Lord. He came then to teach us the truth and show the way to life eternal. Do the people throughout the world until the end of time not need to be taught as well as those who lived in Palestine about nineteen hundred years ago? And what did the Saviour teach? Not bare and naked truths only, but also the practice of the most sublime virtues, the duties of subjects and masters, parents and children, the love of one's neighbor as He has loved us, as well as the means to be employed to remain steadfast in the practice of virtue until the end of our lives. Now it is evident that what Christ taught could

be of no practical benefit to us today, unless it was transmitted to posterity; and to that end Christ must have left some organization to continue the mission He had begun. He could, it is true, have left us a code of laws, so perfect that it needed no interpreter, although in the present condition of human nature this would hardly be practicable; or He might have ordered the Apostles to write all that is indispensable for salvation; but Christ did not do anything of the kind. He willed to propagate His doctrine by word of mouth for all future times, and this regards not only what man must believe, but also what he must do to be saved. "All power is given Me in Heaven and on earth," said Our Lord, "Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them . . . ; teaching them to observe whatever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (Mat. xxviii. 19). No mention is made here of writing, but of teaching, and the Apostles undoubtedly understood the request of the Saviour; for few of the Apostles left behind any writing, and from the Prince of the Apostles himself we have but two short letters, although he converted thousands by his burning words of faith and devotedness to his Master. St. Paul also teaches "that faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" and ends his views on the preaching of faith by saying: "Yes, verily, their (the Apostles') sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the whole world." (Rom. x. 13-18).

We have seen that the Apostles and the bishops of the Church, with St. Peter and his successors at their head, have received the power to govern the faithful in all that regards the salvation of souls; and finally, since no one can be saved without justification from sin or without sanctity, to these teachers of Christ's doctrine was also entrusted the dispensation of the Sacraments instituted by Christ to sanctify each individual member of the Church. Of this we will speak more at length when there is question of the holiness of the Church, when we will explain the means of sanctification, or outward signs of grace obtained mainly through the Sacraments instituted by Christ.

119. Are all bound to belong to the Church?

All are bound to belong to the Church, and he who knows the Church to be the true Church and remains out of it cannot be saved.

From the explanations already given we have learned that God established a visible Church, a society, whose rulers have received the right and the power from the Saviour to teach, to govern, to sanctify and lead all men to their eternal destiny. Now it behooves us to show that all who wish to participate in the merits of Jesus Christ, through Whom alone salvation is to be attained, are bound to belong to that organization we call the Church of Christ, that Church built on the Apostles as a foundation and on the indestructible rock, Peter.

If our Saviour established the Church to teach all men, all are bound to belong to it; for no one can be certain of the true faith unless he learn it from the authorized teachers appointed by Him, for "faith," as we have seen, "cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. x. 17). "How shall they hear without a preacher and how shall they preach unless they be sent?" (Ib. 14, 15.) Likewise, Christ has commanded us to "hear the Church, and he that does not hear the Church let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." (Mat. xviii. 17). And through the Apostle of the Gentiles, He exhorts all the bishops to rule the flock, His Church. (Acts xx. 28). There can be no ruler without subjects and no shepherd without sheep to hear His voice. Finally, the principal means of sanctification are the Sacraments instituted by the Saviour and their dispensation has been confided to the Apostles and their successors. Hear again the Apostle: (1 Cor. iv. 1) "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of His mysteries," i. e., the Sacraments. Hence justification and sanctification can be obtained only through the Apostles and their successors, and sanctity alone makes us children of God and heirs of Heaven.

The arguments which we gave to prove that the Bishop of Rome is the successor of St. Peter and the head of the Church, also prove that all people are in duty bound to be members of the visible organization, called the Church. How can there be but

one sheepfold and one shepherd, unless all the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd, whom Christ Himself has named and appointed? Therefore schismatics as well as heretics are excluded from the Church of God.

Catholics are not alone in believing that "one indeed is the universal Church of the faithful, out of which no one at all can be saved." (Third Council of Lateran). The Anglican Church in its thirty-nine articles holds "accursed who presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth." (Art. 18). Other heresiarchs of the sixteenth century likewise held that there is no salvation for heretics dying out of the Church, but it must be admitted that with their distinction of essential and non-essential truths, and by not caring to tell us which truths belong to either class, they are inclined to accord membership in their church to all those who call themselves Christians, no matter what their faith may be.

Our catechism condemns only those who, knowing the Church to be the true Church, refuse obstinately to enter the Church through ambition, malice, worldliness, or other unworthy motives. We should certainly admit that invincible ignorance will excuse the seemingly culpable negligence of many in keeping out of the true Church. On the other hand, we have good reason to fear for many outside the true Church of Christ, if they have doubts about their religious belief and heed them not. Yea more, there are many, who receive inward warnings, graces, indeed, of the Holy Ghost, which are like lights shining in the darkness or like solicitations to follow the kindly light and to search for the truth, of which they take no notice. To neglect such warnings or inspirations may be fatal, for they may never return. God gives sufficient graces to all to save their soul; but has one who neglect the first graces, a right to other or greater graces? No matter to what church one belongs or to no church at all, if he has any doubts or misgivings about his church or his faith, he is in duty bound to make investigation; for, as his eternal welfare depends on it, he cannot take any chances in the all-important matter of the salvation of his soul.

To belong to the true Church, Baptism, inward faith, and an external or visible membership is required for adults: the last requisite consists in the open profession of the faith, i. e., by the public reception of the Sacraments and by taking part in public worship.

Baptism may be validly received out of the Church, and one who has been so baptized, even as a child, remains a member of the Church until he consciously leaves the Church by obstinate heresy or wilful schism; and therefore we may piously believe that many will be saved among those who, having been

reared by schismatical and heretical parents, continue in good faith in the religion of their childhood. As to the necessity of Baptism we should bear in mind that the desire of it takes the place of Baptism of water, if the latter cannot be received; and there are grave authors who teach as probable, that the heathens, among whom the true faith has not yet been preached, are not in a different condition from those who lived before Baptism became necessary unto salvation, and so they can be saved, if, enlightened by grace, they believe that there is a God and that He rewards those who seek Him.

Heretics who stubbornly resist the grace of God, are particularly condemned by St. Paul: "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid: knowing that he, that is such a one, is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment." (Titus iii. 10-11). But this severe condemnation does not fall upon those that are invincibly ignorant of some dogmas of the Christian Religion. Yet, implicit belief in all what Christ has taught and explicit belief in the principal truths of our holy Religion are imposed upon all. (Cf. No. 12).

LESSON THE TWELFTH

ON THE ATTRIBUTES AND MARKS OF THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

In the preceding number we have seen that the Church has a divine origin, that it was built on a solid rock, Peter, who received from her Founder the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, emblematic of supreme authority in the Church, and that the same Church still lives in Peter's successors, the Bishops of Rome. Now we shall consider the Church in her nature, her attributes, her prerogatives and her distinguishing marks, in order to form a better acquaintance with the society organized to continue the work of salvation begun by Christ, a salvation only possible through the merits of the Saviour, which He entrusted largely to His Church. "As the Father hath sent me I also send you," said Christ to His Apostles, and these words necessarily apply to the successors of the Apostles until the consummation of the world.

Having proved the existence of a society established by the Saviour, which we call the Church, to continue His saving work of love among men, it behooves us to treat of the attributes and marks by which the true Church can easily be recognized. The principal marks and attributes of the Church are: unity, holi-

ness, catholicity, apostolicity, authority, infallibility, and perpetuity or indefectibility.

When it is once admitted that Christ came upon earth to save all men, and that He established a society upon earth which all those wishing to be saved must join, that society or Church should have these four marks or characteristics to distinguish her from all false and spurious churches: viz., unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. Therefore, with the Council of Constantinople, we believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. The three other attributes named may be called prerogatives of the Church: viz., authority, infallibility, and perpetuity; they are, indeed, in some manner characteristic marks of the true Church; but as they are less evident to all men, especially to the unlearned, we will, with the catechism, call them simple attributes or prerogatives of the Church.

120. Has the Church any marks, by which it may be known?

The Church has four marks, by which it may be known: it is one; it is holy; it is catholic; it is apostolic.

From what has been said in the introduction to this lesson, it is plain that, if Christ instituted the Church, to which he willed that all should belong, we may expect from God's goodness and wisdom that the Church possesses some characteristics or marks by which all people may recognize her. "Lest we should be mistaken in distinguishing between the true Church and false sects, which our Lord predicted would arise, He was pleased to stamp upon His Church certain shining marks, by which every sincere inquirer could easily recognize her as His only Spouse." (Faith of Our Fathers).

121. How is the Church one?

The Church is one, because all its members agree in one faith, are all in one communion, and are all under one head.

The unity of the Church consists: 1st, in that all her members agree in one faith; 2nd, that all have the same worship and partake of the same Sacraments, and 3rd, that all are under the same government and under one head.

1. Christ has willed that all the members of His Church should agree in one faith, i. e., that all should believe all that God has revealed to man; for, when the Saviour sent His Apostles to teach all nations, He added: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark xvi. 16). St. Paul (Ephes. iv. 1-6) beseeches the Ephesians to be "careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith and one Baptism. One God and one Father of all." The argument of the Apostle is that as there is only one calling, one hope of salvation, one God and Father of all and one Baptism, so likewise the faithful should form but one body and one spirit in which one faith should be professed. The same Apostle continues to preach the same doctrine (verses 11 to 16), when he shows that although all the members of the Church, the body of Christ, have not the same dignity, still all ought to work toward the perfection of Christ's body, so that all may agree in one faith and so that "we be no more like children tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine."

The Apostle of the Gentiles teaches the same truth over again in His Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. i. 10), and to Timothy (1 Tim. i. 19; and 2 Tim. iii. 17); and we learn also that he excommunicated Hymeneus and Philetus who preached that the resurrection of the dead had taken place already.

The tradition in the early Church on unity of faith is clear and convincing, and those who wish to learn the opinion of the early Fathers of the Church, will find ample quotations from the Fathers' writings on the subject in *Faith of Catholics*, a work which we heartily recommend to all students of Christian Doctrine, who have not the opportunity of examining the writings of the early Fathers in the original languages.

2. The catechism finds a second proof of the unity of the Church in that all the members must be in communion with each other. As the unity of the Church is represented to us as a visible mark, the catechism evidently speaks in the answer of a visible communion.

a communion that exists between all the members of the Church, whom St. Paul compares to the different members of the same body. (Ephes. iv. 15). Internal faith alone would not constitute a visible mark; but when all the members profess openly the same faith and take part in the same worship, and receive the same Sacraments, the unity of faith becomes manifest. Can there be any doubt about the faith of Catholics, who are regenerated in the same sacrament of Baptism; approach the same tribunal for the forgiveness of their sins; partake at the same table of their Eucharistic Lord; and on Sundays and other days attend the same worship, in which the Lamb of God is again and again immolated on our altars?

3. It is manifest also that unity in the Church requires unity of government under one head. Christ our Saviour has chosen the Apostles to teach, to baptize and to forgive sins; but to Peter alone He gave the keys, the emblem of supreme authority; to him alone did He say: "Feed My lambs, Feed My sheep." Christ after declaring that He gave His life for His sheep, continued: "And other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be but one fold and one shepherd." (John x. 16). Reason teaches us that both unity of faith and unity of government demand a center of unity. As to unity of faith, new errors frequently spring up, and who will condemn and eradicate all heretical teachings, without a center of unity, a supreme tribunal that can examine and decide whether this or that apparently false proposition is contrary to revealed truth or not? Therefore, in order to preserve and maintain inviolate the deposit of faith, a center of unity is clearly indispensable. As to the center of unity in the outward government of the Church, who will vouch for the uniform administration of the Sacraments and of the divine worship? Who will be responsible for the observance of the laws of God and of His Church? Who will see to it

that justice be meted out to all the members? To whom will an individual member appeal, if injustice have been done him? Who will convoke the pastors of the Church when the exigencies of the time demand it, if there be no center of authority invested with the power?

Nearly all the heretics of the sixteenth century, and their followers to this day, admit with Catholics that in the Church of God there should be unity of faith; but in order to defend their vagaries and divergencies from the dogmas taught during so many centuries, from the time of the Apostles to their own day, and in order to co-ordinate the hundreds of sects into a semblance of unity, they established a new rule, until then unknown, in judging of the truths of revelation, i. e., they distinguish two kinds of truths, viz., fundamental or essential truths, and non-essential truths; although they do not tell us which are essential truths and which are non-essential. It is more than probable, indeed, that no two sects would agree in defining which truths are fundamental or essential and which are not. What right, we ask, have those pretending Christians to establish a distinction among the teachings of Christ, a distinction which Holy Scripture and Tradition do not warrant? Christ made no such distinction when He sent His Apostles to teach throughout the world, but He clearly threatens with condemnation all who obstinately refuse whatever He had commanded the Apostles to teach: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark xvi. 16). It is evident that the distinction between essential and non-essential truths would be, if put into practice, subversive of all order and of all revelation, as it is destructive of all authority in matters of faith and morals. What becomes of the appeal to the Church, which Christ commands, when one has been seriously offended? How illusory the words of the Saviour would sound: "Tell the Church and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." (Matt. xviii. 17). How groundless would be St. Paul's doctrine when he calls the community over which Timothy presided, "The House of God, . . . the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15), if it be left to every man to reject any particular truth of Revelation, because he considers it non-essential or non-fundamental?

122. How is the Church holy?

The Church is holy, because her Founder, Jesus Christ is holy; because she teaches a holy doctrine; invites all to a holy life, and because of the eminent holiness of so many thousands of her children.

Holiness is a necessary attribute and mark of the Church of God, because the end for which the Church was instituted is the sanctification of her members, and ultimately the salvation of their souls, the reward of holiness. This has been fully explained in No. 118, when we spoke of the end and final object of the institution of the Church. Now we shall give with the catechism several reasons why the true Church is holy.

1. She is holy because her Founder Jesus Christ is holy. Christ founded the Church on a solid foundation, on Peter, the rock. Christ as God is sanctity itself, and as man He is clothed with a quasi-infinite plenitude of sanctifying grace, resulting from the personal or hypostatic union of the Son of God with His assumed soul, from the fulness of which we have all received. We can partially understand, how grace, the spiritual life of the soul, flows as it were from Christ Jesus into our soul, as the blood courses from the heart to every extremity of our bodies, when we learn from Holy Scripture that the living members of the Church, i. e., those that are in the state of sanctifying grace, are living members of Christ's mystical body. What an intimate union exists, then, between the members and Christ the Head. It is not Christ's natural blood that flows through our veins, when we are united to Christ, but life-giving grace permeates our souls and fills them with a divine life: for habitual grace is a participation in the divinity, and abundant actual graces, enlightment of the mind and vigor of the will, excite us to salutary deeds, by which we constantly augment the sanctifying grace and holiness of our souls. "Know you not that your bodies are members of Christ?" asks the Apostle. (1 Cor. vi. 15). The same doctrine is to be found in several other Epistles of his.

2. The Church teaches a holy doctrine. The doctrine of the Church is the doctrine of Christ, and Christ's teachings had only one thing in view, viz., the sanctification of our souls. A catechism is a short compendium of Christian Doctrine, and does not every question and answer lead directly or indirectly to our holiness? What does it teach but all that we have to know and to do here on earth to sanctify our souls and to be united to the God of all holiness hereafter, yea, to participate in the Divine Holiness. This world of ours would become a paradise of saints, if people could only be brought to accept and practice the maxims of the Gospels. The love of God and one's neighbor would take the place of self-love, ambition and glory; unlawful pleasures would be banished from society; hatred and revenge would be smothered by the highest motive of life, to walk in the footsteps of the Saviour. Brotherly love, disinter-

esteeness, and the love of God would become the mainspring of man's enterprises and labors, and all would vie with one another in abounding in good deeds. All these things are contained in two precepts, viz., love God above all things and your neighbor as yourself; or as Christ demanded of His Apostles, from whom a greater love was exacted: "Love one anotner as I have loved you." (John xv. 12). Conceive, if you can, the transformation of this world of sin, if all could be brought to observe this most eminently holy rule.

3. The Church invites all to a holy life, and offers to all the means of grace, the Sacraments, which enable us to become holy and virtuous. The doctrine of Christ invites us all to a holy life, and this doctrine the Church teaches with zeal and perseverance. Plainly evident to all is the holiness of the Church, because she alone possesses all the means to attain holiness, i. e., the Sacraments of which she is the only legitimate dispenser. It would be of but little avail to invite us to a holy life, unless the Church had also to offer the indispensable means to arrive at sanctity. The Sacraments give us the spiritual life of the soul, restore it when it is lost through sin, and increase it when the recipient is already in the state of grace. Prayer is another means of grace and holiness, and how often does the Church remind us of the obligation to pray and to pray always! Every priest is exhorted daily to offer up the Holy Sacrifice, the highest form of prayer, the source of untold spiritual advantages. How many thousand sinners owe the beginning of their conversion and salvation to the Sacrifice of the Cross, offered up on our altars! How many receive therein the first grace that finally leads the sinner to abandon his evil ways and to feel that sorrow of heart, which culminates in a newness of life and forgiveness of sins at the feet of the priest in the tribunal of Penance! (Cf. No. 135).

4. The Church is holy because of the eminent holiness of so many thousands of her children. We should naturally expect that, if not all, at least a large number of her members should lead holy lives. We may point with pride to the hundreds of thousands of religious of both sexes, who have consecrated themselves to the service of God and of their neighbor. If we sincerely wish to find the Church of God, we shall find it where holiness is in evidence, not only in the individual lives of many, but in the institutions whose rules effectively promote sanctity. We shall find the Church where the Gospel is preached to the poor, where charity abounds, and where there are many if not all, who in spite of persecutions, still walk in the footsteps of the Saviour: "If thou wilt be perfect, sell what thou hast, ... and follow Me." "He that does not take up his cross and follow Me, is not worthy of Me." Seek the Church where you will find in practice the golden rule, laid down by Christ for His dis-

ciples: "Love one another as I have loved you." Seek the Church where not only individual members, but whole communities are bound by their rules to follow closely the example of the Saviour. Interrogate the saintly martyrs, evoke the spirits of the ancient dwellers of the desert solitude, glance over the lists of the great Doctors and of the saints who have illustrated the Church from the beginning and if this will not yet enlighten you, then enter and inquire at the doors of monasteries, of numberless charitable institutions, and of convents of men and women; investigate the lives of those who dwell there, and you will find the remedies for every human ailment and misery, and, however diversified the charitable aim of each institution may be, you will find the practice of that fundamental law, which imposes on all inmates to work out their own salvation by the holiness of their lives.

123. How is the Church catholic or universal?

The Church is catholic or universal, because it subsists in all ages, teaches all nations and maintains all truth.

I believe . . . in the Holy Catholic Church. (Apostles' Creed).

The word "catholic" from the Greek "cata" (from top to bottom, down, through) and "holos" (whole, entire) primarily means "universal," or "general." The Apostles' Creed warrants the belief that the name "Catholic" was already applied to the Church of Christ shortly after His Ascension, and St. Clement of Alexandria (about 200 A. D.) speaks of the Catholic Church, as the well-known Church founded by the Redeemer.

The answer of the Catechism refers to a double catholicity, for Christ intended His Church to be catholic as to time, and catholic as to place or extent.

I. The Church entered upon its mission of saving souls on the first Christian Pentecost, when the Apostles, having received the Holy Ghost began to preach the teachings of its Founder, and baptized all those who believed in His doctrine. From that day it was to last through all ages until the end of time. This is clearly set forth in the Saviour's promise: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations . . . and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 19-20). The Church was built upon an indestructible rock, and Chirst assured Peter that the gates of

hell would not prevail against it. The Angel Gabriel's prophecy which accompanied the announcement of the Virgin's miraculous conception, had also to be fulfilled: Your Son Jesus, said the divine messenger, "will reign in the house of Jacob forever and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i. 32, 33).

The catholicity of the Church as to time does not differ from its attribute of perpetuity, of which we speak hereafter. (No. 131).

We should inquire here, what connection, if any, there is between the Catholic Church and other societies or organizations, which, previous to the coming of the Saviour, were called into existence to lead people to their eternal destiny.

When God created our first parents, He willed to make them deserve their eternal destiny, for He demanded of them that they sacrifice their will, by abstaining from eating the forbidden fruit. They disobeyed God's command and thereby lost the eternal happiness to which they were destined. Their sin changed their relation to their Maker. The obligation to follow the natural law inscribed in their hearts, remained the same; but in view of the necessity of expiating their sin, although a Redeemer was promised, God demanded the co-operation of man in the work of his regeneration, and sacrifices became the outward signs of his heart-felt penitence. Besides, man's intellect was obscured and his will weakened, so that great efforts were required and more and stronger graces were necessary, to enable the sinful children of Adam to persevere in the service of their God; hence the obligation of invoking God's help in private and in public. Enos the son of Seth was the first to organize the public worship of the true God (Gen. iv. 26); he assumed priestly functions and thus kept alive the memory of the revelations made to Adam. His immediate descendants, the patriarchs or heads of families, followed in Enos' footsteps, until the population became more numerous, when God-fearing men were selected to perform the duties of the priesthood, i. e., to teach, to preach and to offer up sacrifices and public prayer.

Enos thus became the first high-priest in the primitive Church, and the simple primitive religion, as we learn from St. Paul, remained the true religion of all peoples until Christ came upon the earth. Abraham and his descendants, however, had special religious obligations. The Lord God imposed upon them the law of circumcision, and to them, after the delivery of the Jews from the Egyptian slavery, He proclaimed through Moses the natural law anew, establishing a Church, the Synagogue, with well-defined sacrifices, a more perfect priesthood and all

other things necessary for the civil and religious government of the people. The principal object of the Mosaic dispensation was to keep alive, in the minds and hearts of the Jews, the belief in the true God, and to prepare the way for the coming of the Redeemer.

From what has been said regarding the primitive dispensation and the Jewish Synagogue, we understand the relation these two dispensations bear to the Catholic Church: the primitive dispensation was simple in its faith, laws and exterior worship; it was developed through Moses under the Synagogue, and was finally perfected and completed through Christ under the Law of Grace. The three religions, Patriarchal, Mosaic and Christian, are in reality but one and the same, in three stages of development, so that the Catholic Church had its origin in the beginning of the world, and like three phases of the moon, i. e., from the new to the full moon, it attained its full splendor when the Light from heaven, the Sun of Justice, shone upon the world in all its beauty and midday splendor.

II. By the word "Catholic," when referred to the true Church, we mean that the Church is spread among all the nations of the earth; and in that sense, it is one of the most conspicuous marks of the Church of Christ for all men, even for the unlearned. It is so characteristic of the Church of God, and is so convincing, that already in St. Augustine's time, some heretics adopted this name as a cloak to deceive the unwary. This imposture has also been tried, although unsuccessfully, in our own days.

It cannot be said that the Church would cease to be the true Church, if it were not recognized and accepted by all nations and peoples, as the true Church founded by the Saviour: but by the word "catholic" we mean that it must be preached all over the world, according to Christ's command: "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark xvi. 15, 16). Not all believe, and not all are saved. How well the Apostles understood the command of their Master, we learn from St. Paul. Speaking of the preaching of the Gospel he says: "Faith cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ. But I say: have they not heard? Yes, verily, their (the Apostles') sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words into the end of the whole world." (Rom. x. 17, 18).

Reason, likewise, argues the need of catholicity in the Church founded by our Redeemer; for He came to save all men, and hence He desires that all should participate in His merits through the means He instituted, and the dispensation of which He left to His Church. "Let a man so regard us, as ministers of Christ and the dispensers of God's mysteries," i. e., of His sacraments. (1 Cor. iv. 1). The successors of the Apostles, the bishops and priests of the true Church, must not less than the Apostles themselves, assume the task of feeding the lambs of the fold, and to the successor of St. Peter, it belongs to feed both sheep and lambs with the wholesome spiritual food, Christ's heavenly doctrine and the life-giving Sacraments, which Christ purchased with His blood, and which lead both the shepherds and the flock to the celestial kingdom. The Saviour will see to it that the shepherds of the fold will never be lacking, for He has promised that His Church will last until the consummation of the world.

III. If we were in search of the true Church of Jesus Christ, we should naturally expect, besides its universality or catholicity which regards its extension, that there should be in all the local churches, spread over the length and breadth of this earth, a sameness in all that essentially constitutes the perfect religion of the Saviour, for otherwise they could not be said to be the same church.

All Protestants agree that Christ was sent by God to teach us the way to heaven. Can the Protestant religion be called catholic? By no means; because it is divided into hundreds of sects, which cannot agree on those things which essentially constitute the religion taught by Christ and preached by His Apostles. There should be identity in the external government of the Church, in the essential practices concerning the sacrifice commanded by God, in the administration of the Sacraments and in the doctrine preached by the ministers of God and the dispensers of His mysteries. It is

this identity of all the Churches of the world under one head that constitutes the most striking and convincing mark of the Church of God, namely its catholicity. Only four questions were asked by the good woman of Urukami (Japan) to ascertain from the priest, who was building a church at Nagasaki, whether he belonged to the Catholic church or not: Is this not Lent? Who is the head of your church? What is meant by the statue of the woman with a child in her arms? Where is your wife? When she learned from the explanation of the good priest that the forty days fast of Lent was observed in his church, that the head of his church was the Bishop of Rome, that in his church the Blessed Virgin was honored as the Mother of the Redeemer, and that priests do not marry, she was convinced that she was speaking to a representative of the religion founded by Christ, and she, as spokesman for the other women who accompanied her as well as for herself, said: "We are of the same heart," that is, we are of the same faith. The pious woman might have assured herself further that she was in a Catholic church by inquiring about the number of the Sacraments, the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Blessed Trinity and the doctrine of the Redemption; but she rightly thought that the four questions already asked were so characteristic of the Church of God, that further inquiries were unnecessary.

124. How is the Church apostolic?

The Church is apostolic, because it was founded by Christ on His Apostles and is governed by their lawful successors, and because it has never ceased nor will ever cease to preach their doctrine.

Christ is as it were the corner-stone, and the Apostles the foundation of the Church (Ephes. ii. 20), and Peter is the permanent rock upon which the edifice is constructed. The rock is necessary for the stability of the superstructure; the Builder Christ has laid the corner-stone, and whereas He Himself is the corner-stone, the

foundation can be begun only when the corner-stone has given by its accurate angles the direction of the foundation for the walls. St. John (Ap. xxi. 14) speaking of the New Jerusalem, the Church, maintains the same figure, when He says: "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them, the twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb."

The Church of Christ is His own work, but He chose His Apostles to preach His doctrine and govern His Church. We must, then, unite ourselves with them, if we wish to be living stones of the sacred edifice. First, the religion we profess must be apostolic and secondly, our bishops must be successors of the Apostles in a direct line or appointed by such successors. To the heretics we can say: you are only of yesterday. Your doctrine is not apostolic, but is an innovation. Your name condemns you: you are Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Baptists, etc., i. e., followers of those who brought innovation into the Church of God, or your name indicates a new departure or a change of doctrine or of government. Who sent you to preach a new doctrine or to alter the constitution which the Saviour gave to His Church? To the schismatics we can say: You have broken the chain of tradition which incorporated your forefathers in Christ's mystical body. There was a time when your predecessors recognized Peter's successor as the head of Christendom; and now that you have withdrawn from the unity, the Ecumenical Councils, the doctrines of the early ages of the Church and its uninterrupted practices, laws and customs, condemn you; neither was your doctrine taught by the Apostles nor are you visible members of the Church, the mystical body of Christ, from which you have been cut off.

125. In which Church are these attributes or marks found?

These attributes or marks are found in the Holy Roman Catholic Church alone.

1. The Holy Catholic Church, over which the Bishop of Rome rules, is one in doctrine of faith and morals, has one and the same worship, dispenses all the Sacraments instituted by Christ, and unites all its members under one and the same supreme Head the Pope, the successor of St. Peter. The Roman Catholic Church preserves its unity, because the Pope wielding supreme authority over all the members of the Church

and in all matters that relate to the salvation of souls, has been constituted by Christ the center of unity. For him has Christ prayed that his faith fail not and that he confirm all others in the faith. (Luke xxii. 32). The Pope is the supreme court with unlimited power to bind and to loose. From his decision there is no appeal. The Saviour has delegated all His power to His Vicar upon earth; for to him He has given the keys of His kingdom, ratifying beforehand all that His Vicar on earth may decide. The supreme jurisdiction in all matters relating to the salvation of souls is beautifully expressed by St. Jerome, when He says: "One is chosen, that, by appointing one head, all occasion of schism may be removed." (Contra Jovin.)

We have only to read the profession of faith of the Council of Trent and of the Vatican Council, to feel convinced that the Roman Catholic Church possesses the principle of unity, i. e., the necessary prerogatives, viz., supreme authority, infallibility, and perpetuity, of the Chair of Peter, which insures forever unity of faith, of worship, of the means of sanctification and of government in all the churches in communion with the Apostolic See of Rome.

If other Christian churches try to maintain a certain unity of doctrine, they have no center of unity, no supreme tribunal to keep their faith inviolate; and consequently disintegration must be the natural result: each individual is a law to himself, and no one has a right to question his faith. The Holy Scriptures are according to most Protestants the only rule of faith, but, since each individual in interpreting them, is accountable only to his private inspiration, the word of God must be, in their estimation, as elastic as the conscience of each individual reader.

2. There may be many holy and well-meaning people outside the true Church, and since no one shall be condemned except through his onw fault, invincible ignorance will excuse from guilt many who are born and educated in heretical and schismatic churches. But even then the church to which they profess to belong cannot be holy. The Saviour established only one Church, and we have shown already that the Roman Catholic Church is the Church which He founded on Peter, as the rock, and on the Apostles as its foundation.

In the Catholic Church there are wicked men, who are not holy in the ordinary sense of the word, because they are sinners, and therefore deprived of sanctifying grace in which individual holiness consists. But they are members of a holy Church; they have been regenerated in the holy waters of Baptism; they still keep the true faith which is holy; they may have also received other sanctifying Sacraments, and they belong to the mystical body of Christ, as dead members, it is true, but as long as they do not leave the Church through obstinate heresy or schism, the Sacraments they did receive worthily and their membership in the Communion of Saints will not be entirely lost: the grace of God often works wonders and the fear of His judgments, which is the beginning of wisdom and which brought forgiveness to the good thief, may also bestow remorse of conscience on the most obstinate sinner, and a beginning of love of God. These good dispositions may obtain their conversion and a happy death through the Sacraments of the dying.

When good and pious Catholics come in question—what means of holiness are in store for them! They participate in all the Sacraments that are received daily by the faithful, in the thousands of Masses offered up continually, in all the good and pious works of all the members of the Communion of Saints here upon earth, and we should mention in particular the prayers rising to heaven as a sweet perfume and acceptable incense from religious communities for every faithful son and daughter of Holy Church. Lastly, the intercession of the saints in heaven will never cease to be a source of consolation and sanctification for all the living members of the Church upon earth.

Miracles are not now as necessary as when the Church was in its infancy and when it needed the direct and visible intervention of God to propagate the Gospel among civilized and barbarous peoples; but the Catholic Church has never been without men and women of truly heroic lives, who have during their sojourn upon earth performed many wonders and miracles. The process of canonization in use in the Catholic Church is a sufficient proof of our assertion; and the authentic lives of the saints of recent date warrant the conviction that the Catholic Church may still point to miracles and prophecies as a proof of her holiness. (Wilmer's Handbook).

3. The Catholic Church alone can be called universal, because, as St. Augustine says: "It is diffused by the splendor of one faith from the rising to the setting sun."

To what Church but to the Catholic Church can the prophecy of Malachy apply, when, foreseeing the only

sacrifice acceptable to God, he says: "From the rising of the sun to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clear oblation; for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. i. 11).

How consoling and glorious for a Catholic to be a member of the Church that is not circumscribed within the limits of one or several nations, among whom one and the same language is spoken, but contains in her bosom members of all nationalities and of all tongues, civilized and barbarous alike. Let him sing the grateful song: "Thou are worthy, O Lord . . . because Thou hast redeemed us to God in Thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God, a kingdom." (Apoc. v. 9, 10). David had foreseen the glories of the Church when in a prophetic spirit, he said: "Ask of Me and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thy inheritance and the utmost part of the earth for Thy possession." (Psalm ii. 3). The gates of hell will never prevail against that truly Catholic and universal Church, built on a rock, and therefore it will comprise not only all the faithful, that have existed from Adam to the present day, but also all those who will profess the true faith, until the end of time. (Rom. Cat.) (Cf. No. 123).

4. The Roman Catholic Church alone is apostolic, because it alone teaches the true faith which the Apostles preached, and its bishops in a long and unbroken line are recognized successors of the Apostles. Of all outsiders we have the right to ask the origin of their church. Can they claim communion with the successors of the Apostles? Every Catholic priest and bishop knows that, unless he can, through the bishop who ordained or consecrated him, claim allegiance with the Church of the Apostles, he is an intruder. But the clerical pedigree of each priest and bishop is easily proved. There is not a priest or bishop in the Catholic Church who cannot trace his descent to one of the Apostolic Sees. The first apostles of every western nation of Europe were nearly all sent by the Vicar of Christ, the Bishop of Rome: St. Patrick to Ireland, St. Augustine to England, St. Boniface to Germany, St. Cyril and St. Methodius to the Slavs, Bohemians

and other nationalities. The Catholic bishops of these United States also received their commission from the Bishop of Rome, and the same is true of the bishops of our neighboring republic Mexico and of all the other republics of South America. We might pass through Asia and Africa and all the Islands of the Pacific, and everywhere we see the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome recognized by all Catholic priests and bishops, and through them by all the faithful; and each and every Catholic bishop will admit that he owes his office and jurisdiction of the Bishop of bishops, the occupant of Peter's Apostolic See. (*Faith of our Fathers.*)

126. By whom is the Church kept one, holy, catholic and apostolic?

The Church is kept one, holy, catholic and apostolic by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Love and Holiness, Who unites and sanctifies its members throughout the world.

If the Catholic Church were of human institution it would, like the works of all human efforts, have crumbled long ago under the weight of its ponderous superstructure, no matter what its foundation might have been. The very fact that the extent of its authority and jurisdiction is commensurate with the limits of this earth, militates against its unity and permanence. The strongest bond of all human society is the common interest of its members; but self-interest in temporal matters does not contribute to holiness of life. Mohammedanism has had a long life, but it flatters the passions of man; whilst the Catholic Church wars on them and commands us to subjugate all unruly passions together with the concupiscence of the flesh. There has been but one other institution in the history of the world similar to that of the Catholic Church and that is the Jewish Synagogue. It was truly divine, and its mission was to prepare the world for the Gospel of Christ; but when its mission was accomplished, its existence

came to an end. The very humble beginning of the Church with twelve men, nearly all fishermen, had nothing to allure people to join their faithful and resolute band, and those men, ignorant, according to human estimation, started to overcome the world by preaching Jesus crucified and His holy doctrine. Kings and emperors, yea, whole nations, and among them the power of the heathen Roman empire, were leagued together for the destruction of the Church. Philosophers and scientists, schism and heresy, the powers of hell and of earth, have conspired against her, and nevertheless the Church today is more glorious and more influential for good than ever. He who does not see the hand of God in the preservation of the Church through so many centuries of warfare, whilst the nations that persecuted her have crumbled to dust, must indeed be blinded by ambition, selfishness or malice.

We must then look for other than human effort and power to account for the four marks of the Church of God: viz., unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. Happily her Founder and His disciples have instructed us not to look for human aid in what regards the welfare of the Church, but to expect help only from above. Heaven and earth may pass away, but the promises of Christ shall be fulfilled. The Church, in spite of all persecutors, will last until time is no more. "Behold," said our Lord to His Apostles, when He sent them on their mission to preach, "I am with you even to the consummation of the world," and to Peter: "Thou art Peter (rock) and upon this rock I shall build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Is it necessary to explain that, if the Church should ever cease to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic, she would cease to be what her Founder ordained her to be, viz., a city built on a hill that all who are willing to lift up their eyes might see, the Spouse of Christ unspotted, pure and holy, the mystical body of Christ whose members are all closely united together in the unity of faith, and in the bond of the same spiritual life, and the vine that gives vigor and growth to all the branches attached to it, so that all may bear fruit? Who will destroy the City which the Saviour has built, or who will corrupt the Spouse He has chosen? Who will dismember the Body of Christ and who will deprive the Vine of its life?

Christ has, then, willed that His Church should be forever one, holy, catholic and apostolic; but although He remains the

invisible Head of the Church, the Father in His own name and in the name of His Son, sent the Holy Ghost to adorn the Spouse of Christ with all the graces which it behooved infinite Love to bestow upon the beloved One, whose love the Son of God has purchased with His life. The catechism rightly attributes the work of keeping the Church one, holy, catholic and apostolic to the Holy Ghost, because He is the Spirit of Love, the Love of the Father and of the Son, and what greater love can there be than to sanctify the Church established by Christ and all its members, and thus complete our redemption and salvation, determined upon by the Blessed Trinity, i. e., begun by the Father, Who sent His Son, executed by the wisdom and the sacrifice of the Son and completed by the sanctity of the Holy Ghost?

Let us now see how the Holy Ghost has further endowed the Church, the Spouse of Christ, with other prerogatives as evidences of His wonderful love.

127. Has the Church any other attributes besides the four marks?

The Church has also these three attributes: authority, infallibility and perpetuity.

These three prerogatives or attributes with the marks already explained, contain all the other properties of the Church worthy of note; e. g., the visibility of the Church is easily deduced from her authority to teach, to govern the faithful and to administer to them the Sacraments instituted by Christ.

128. What do you mean by the authority of the Church?

By the authority of the Church I mean the right and power which the Pope and bishops, as the successors of the Apostles, have to teach and govern the faithful.

We have explained above that the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, is the successor of St. Peter, and that the bishops of the Catholic Church are successors of the other Apostles. All the members of the Catholic Church are not equal; some have the right to teach and others are the hearers; some command and others must obey. We distinguish among those placed in authority in the Church a double prerogative: the authority to teach and

the authority to govern the faithful committed to their care. The same arguments we presented to prove that the bishops are the successors of the Apostles, determine likewise that this twofold authority belongs to the bishops of the Catholic Church; for no one can deny that Christ gave His Apostles the right to preach His whole doctrine, or that the bishops of Ephesus convened by St. Paul had the mission to govern the faithful under their charge. Nearly all the heretics of the sixteenth century reject an episcopal jurisdiction superior to that of the pastor of the different congregations. Even the Episcopalians and Methodists, who have retained the episcopal dignity in their churches, either attribute the institution of the episcopal dignity to the Apostles and not to Christ, or are silent on the subject "lest the calling and character of the ministry in most of the reformed churches might be questioned." (Cfr. Kenrick's Dogm. Theol. vol. 1, p. 246, 247). This fear is now well grounded, since Rome has decided that even the Anglican ordinations according to the ritual of Edward VI are invalid. The form of ordination: "Take the Holy Ghost: and remember that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee by the imposition of hands: for God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love and soberness," was considered sufficient by Catholic theologians to express the effect of the sacrament, and Rome has sustained their conclusion.

What was the consensus, we ask, among all the churches of the East and of the West, when the so-called Reformation began, and the many sects sprang up? We have given extracts from various letters of St. Ignatius, and these conclusively prove the doctrine of the Church, that priests cannot exercise their sacred functions unless authorized thereto by their respective bishops, who alone are commissioned by Christ Himself to exercise their authority of teaching and governing their flock. (Cfr. No. 117). If we accepted the Protestant theory that bishops and priests are equal in authority, we should be compelled to admit the inevitable consequence that the Apostles themselves and all their successors, together with all Christian antiquity, have adopted a doctrine and practice at variance with the institutions

of Christ; a conclusion which would be contrary to His promises to be with His Church until the consummation of the world, to keep the gates of hell from prevailing against it, and to send the Holy Ghost to abide with His Apostles until the end of time. (Kenrick, l. c.)

The authority to teach all nations includes the right to condemn all errors against faith and morals, and therefore it is evident that when the Apostles and their successors have at all times anathematized heretical doctrines, they only followed the injunction of the Lord. (Matt. xviii. 17).

That the Church is infallible in her decisions in matters of faith and morals, will be shown in the next number.

The authority to rule the Church which belongs to the Apostles and their successors under the primacy and jurisdiction of Peter and his successors in the Apostolic See of Rome, includes the right and power to frame laws for the spiritual welfare of all its members with the proper sanction to insure their observance. The weapons of coercion wielded by the Church are only spiritual, and excommunication is the most severe of all her punishments. St. Paul himself used this spiritual weapon, and it has been in use at all times in the Church of God.

This same authority of the Church extends also to its discipline with regard to divine worship and the administration of the Sacraments, excepting however the essentials or substance of the Sacraments and of the Sacrifice of the New Law; for those being of divine institution cannot be changed even by the Church.

Finally the authority of the Church comprises the right to judge not only all cases of suspected heresy, but all other things that regard the government of the Church, the divine worship and the administration of the Sacraments. "All power is given Me in heaven and on earth. . . As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." (John xx. 21). . . "Going therefore, teach ye all nations. . . Teaching them to observe all things whatso-

ever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 18-20). "He that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark xvi. 16). He that does not hear the Church. . . Let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." (Matt. xviii. 17). These texts already often quoted denote that the Church, built on a solid rock and founded upon the Apostles, has a triple authority: magisterial or the right to teach the doctrine of Christ; legislative or the power of framing ecclesiastical laws tending to the spiritual welfare of her members; and judicial or the right to decide without appeal all cases of faith and morals and whatsoever appertains to the divine worship, to the Sacraments and to the execution of all divine and ecclesiastical laws

Let us note here that the Church is instituted for the spiritual and eternal welfare of all its members, and civil governments, be they empires, kingdoms or republics, have solely the material and temporal welfare of their people in view. There should be no contention for superiority between the two authorities: each is supreme in its class, and without possible confusion: for, according to their institution, civil and ecclesiastical powers are of a different order: one of the temporal and the other of the spiritual order; but all legitimate authority is from God. St. Paul admonishes us Catholics, saying: "Obey your prelates, and be subject to them, for they watch as having to render an account of your souls." (Heb. xiii. 17). St. Peter likewise bids us obey all legitimate authority: "Be ye subject therefore to every human creature for God's sake, whether it be the king as excelling, or to governors sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers and for the praise of the good." (1 Peter ii. 13, 14). (Cfr. Wilmer's Handbook).

The Constitution of the United States guarantees to all liberty of religious worship, but we see too often that the same religious liberty is not granted in other countries to their subjects. Catholics as well as Protestants should join in condemnation of the civil government's interference in matters strictly religious. Unhappily Protestants often join infidels, free-thinkers, agnostics, rationalists and materialists by aiding in the overthrow of religious freedom, as long as they themselves are tolerated. There should be, in all countries, more union among Catholics to defend their rights as such: but as long as party-strife in politics is uppermost in their mind, or personal advan-

tage is paramount in their affiliations, religious apathy and indifference to Catholic interests is sure to follow. (Ibid.)

The civil power has no right to interfere in purely religious matters. In Christ's teaching, there is not the slightest insinuation that civil power may meddle in matters relating to the authority of the Church, or concerning her laws and practices. Furthermore Christian princes and rulers must submit to the authority of the Church in all matters spiritual, as well as the least among their subjects. On the other hand, all Catholics, even the dignitaries of the Church, must obey the just civil laws of the country whose citizens they are. Such is the teaching of Christ: "Render to Caeser the things that are Caeser's, and to God the things that are God's." (Luke xx. 25).

129. What do we mean by the infallibility of the Church?

By the infallibility of the Church I mean that the Church cannot err when she teaches a doctrine of faith and morals.

The all-wise Founder of the Church was sent on earth to teach all men the way to eternal happiness, i. e., all that men should know and do to reach their final destiny after this life. What man should know belongs to the domain of faith, and what he should do belongs to that of morals. But Christ did not remain on earth, and as He wishes all men to the end of time to be saved, He chose His Apostles and their successors to continue His mission. This is what He declares when He says: "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." (John xx. 21). "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations. . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 18-20). "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark xvi. 16). Note in these quotations that Christ sent His Apostles as He had been sent, that is, with a similar power to teach all truth and to command with the same authority; hence what the Apostles teach and command as necessary for salvation, is of equal weight with what

He teaches and commands. Can the Apostles err in their teachings, if they are sent as Christ was sent? Certainly not. Besides, they who believe not the Apostles shall be condemned; can we conceive that Christ could condemn those who did not believe, if the teachers were not infallible? Finally, the words spoken by Our Lord were intended also for the successors of the Apostles, because He promised to be with them until the consummation of the world. How could Christ be with His Apostles unless they are understood to live in their successors, who are to continue Christ's mission until the end of time?

We may also quote again the words of Christ addressed to the Prince of the Apostles when He promised to build His Church upon the rock (Peter), and added: "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvi. 18). Would hell or Satan, the father of lies, not prevail against the Church if it could teach an untruth? Christ also promised His Apostles the Spirit of Truth to abide with them forever; therefore also with the Apostles' successors forever: "I shall ask the Father and He will give you another Paraclete (consoler, advocate) that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of truth." (John xiv. 16, 17). "When the Spirit of Truth is come, He will teach you all truth." (John xvi. 13). Why would the Holy Ghost teach the Apostles and their successors all truth, unless to enable them to impart all truth to those over whom the Holy Ghost has placed them as rulers or overseers (episcopi, bishops)?

One more proof from Scripture: St. Paul writes to Timothy: "If I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. iii. 15) The Holy Ghost calls the Church the pillar, the ground of truth, because it is the pillar upon which truth rests as upon a solid foundation. Could the Church of the living God be the pillar that holds up all truth, if she could teach error? Verily, when Protestants try to distort the sense of St. Paul's words, we must conclude, with Bloomfield, that their arguments are but a "forced exposition devised merely to evade the arguments or claims of opponents."

Tradition.—The Church has always held that her decisions in matters of faith and morals are infallible; the proof thereof will be evident to all those who are willing to examine the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils of the Church. Whenever a new error or heresy sprang up, which might subvert many of the

faithful, the bishops of the Church were called together to decide the question at issue and condemn the erroneous doctrine, by anathematizing or excluding from the Church those that held it. Thus, the First Ecumenical Council, held at Nicea in Bithynia in 325, condemned the Arians, who taught that the Son was a creature of God, and the Fathers proclaimed that the Son is consubstantial with the Father. The Second Ecumenical Council, held in Constantinople in 381, condemned Macedonius who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost. In the Third Ecumenical Council, held at Ephesus in 431, Nestorius was condemned because he distinguished two persons in Christ and denied to the Blessed Virgin the title of Mother of God. The next Council, held at Chalcedon in 451, condemned the error of Eutyches who denied that in Christ there are two natures. These and all other Ecumenical Councils, including the last Council of the Vatican, counting twenty in all, decided principally questions of faith concerning which new errors had sprung up; but they decided likewise cases of discipline that regarded the external profession of the Faith and the observance of the laws of God and of the Church.

The Ecumenical Councils only followed the practice already begun at the time of the Apostles, who convened in Jerusalem to decide the question whether or not the law of Moses, and particularly circumcision, was binding upon the converts from among the Gentiles. (Acts xv. 5, 6). This first Council decided principally a matter of discipline; for the rescript of the Council sent to the brethren of Antioch was as follows: "It has seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no farther burden upon you than these necessary things: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which things keeping yourselves, you shall do well." (Acts xv. 28, 29). But this question whether or not the Jewish ceremonial law was obligatory upon the Gentiles converted to Christianity, contains also implicitly a question of faith, viz., that Christ had come to save Jew and Gentile alike, that all were called to the true faith, and therefore that the Gospel had to be preached to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. (Ib. xv. 7-11). This fact is clearly set forth in the opening address of St. Peter (Ib. xv. 7-11); hence the Council implicitly declared what St. Paul so clearly teaches, namely, that before God there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile, and that Christ died for all men.

The practice of the Church to condemn heresy and to anathematize its adherents, proves sufficiently that the Church has always claimed infallibility as one of her prerogatives and therefore we are sure that the early Fathers of both Greek and Latin Churches taught likewise; hence to fill the pages of this Cate-

chism with extracts from their writings seems quite superfluous. The Church was instituted to teach Christ's doctrine, and the object of its institution would be frustrated if it could teach error.

130. When does the Church teach infallibly?

The Church teaches infallibly when it speaks through the Pope and bishops united in general council, or through the Pope alone when he proclaims to all the faithful a doctrine of faith or morals.

1. The Apostles and their successors, the bishops of the Catholic Church, alone have been invested by our Lord with the right and power to teach His holy doctrine (Cf. No. 116, 117); hence, since the Church is infallible in matters of faith and morals, the bishops with the Pope at their head, who alone have magisterial authority in the Church, are infallible in their teachings. The bishops cannot claim this prerogative individually, but only collectively, i. e., when they are united together as the teaching Church in council under the authority of the Bishop of Rome.

2. The Church teaches infallibly when all the Catholic bishops throughout the world, as well as the Pope, clearly teach to their people a truth as revealed by the Saviour. The saying of St. Vincent of Lerins that "What is believed by all and at all times and in every place, is truly and properly Catholic," has become an axiom among Catholic theologians.

3. The Church teaches infallibly also, when the belief of its bishops is ascertained by interrogating them, and their unanimous or nearly unanimous opinion, made known to St. Peter's successor, is approved by him and proclaimed as revealed truth. Pope Pius IX used this means before proclaiming the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. He ascertained first the belief of all the bishops of the world and of their respective clergy and flocks on that particular doctrine, and finding their belief nearly unanimous, he added his own authority as

Vicar of Christ, and proclaimed the dogma as an article of faith to be believed by all.

4. The Church teaches infallibly, finally, when the Pope, as the successor of St. Peter and visible head of the Church, proclaims to the whole world an article of faith to be believed by all. Then the Pope is said to speak "ex cathedra," i. e., as occupant of Peter's Apostolic See, for the word "cathedra" means See or Chair of Peter. When he speaks "ex cathedra," he decrees with the authority conferred on Peter and his successors.

We have already proved that the Bishop of Rome is the successor of St. Peter with all the prerogatives attached to the visible headship of the Church. (No. 115, 116). Christ commissioned Peter to "feed His lambs and His sheep," i. e., the sheep of the fold of which He is the invisible Shepherd. Since Christ speaks evidently of a spiritual food to be fed to His flock, there is question in this passage of the food of a true and infallible doctrine, which is the wholesome and spiritual food of the soul; for "without faith it is impossible to please God." Of what avail could a false or erroneous doctrine be to feed the soul? Our Lord at the Last Supper prayed for Simon Peter, and why particularly for him? Hear our Lord Himself: "Simon, Simon . . . I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren," i. e., in the faith. (Luke xxii. 31, 32). There can be no other meaning to these words but that the Master prays in order that His disciple may not waver or fail in his faith, and that he may, after his conversion, confirm all his brethren in the faith. By the word "brethren" may be understood the other Apostles or the whole flock which he is commissioned to feed with the salutary doctrine of the true faith. In either sense, Peter feeds the whole flock directly, or indirectly through the Apostles. We know that the prayer of Christ in this case must have been intended to be efficacious: the circumstances of the time and place insure it, and Christ Himself has taught us that His Father heareth Him always. (John xi. 42). (See Wilmer's Handbook).

Let us now see the decisions of the Church on the question of the infallibility attached to the Apostolic See of Peter, when Peter or his successors decide "ex cathedra" a question of faith or morals. The Second Council of Lyons teaches at least implicitly the Pope's infallibility when he proclaims certain truths as revealed. "Whereas he (the Pope)", says the Council, "has above all others the duty to defend the faith, so disputes about faith must be decided by his judgment." The mind of the Council seems clear; for it argues that if the Pope is the defender

of the Faith, he necessarily has the right and privilege to settle all disputes relating to it by an authoritative judgment. Is it possible to exact internal assent from litigant if a decision is not infallible? In our civil courts when a litigant is defeated in one court, he appeals to a higher court, because he is confident that the lower court erred, and when the highest court in the land has been reached and the same litigant is again beaten, he cannot appeal any more; but he may still be convinced that the decisions against him were unjust, because the higher court is not infallible. In matters of faith and morals the decision of the Pope, the highest court in the Church from which there is no appeal, is binding on the conscience of the faithful, for their assent becomes obligatory when there is question of faith or belief. "He that does not hear the Church let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." Can we conceive that God would exact from us a conscientious and internal assent, if the decision "ex cathedra" were not infallible?

Our first argument in favor of the infallibility of the Bishop of bishops, taken from the text, "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep," is clearly affirmed in the Council of Florence, when it says that the "Bishop of Rome is the teacher of all Christians and to him, in the person of St. Peter, has been given full power to feed, to rule and to govern the whole Church." Christ could not intend to feed the faithful, the sheep of His fold, on erroneous doctrines.

The last Ecumenical Council, known as the Vatican Council, convened in 1869, and adjourned in 1870, on account of the capture of Rome, has the following decree on the Church: "With the approval of the Sacred Council, we teach and define it to be a divinely revealed truth that the Roman Pontiff, when, speaking "ex cathedra," that is, when, discharging the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, he defines in virtue of his supreme apostolic prerogative a doctrine regarding faith and morals to be held by the whole Church, is endowed through the divine assistance promised him in the person of St. Peter, with that infallibility which our divine Redeemer wished His Church to enjoy in defining doctrines of faith and morals; and therefore, (we teach and define) such definitions of the Roman Pontiffs to be of themselves and not in virtue of the consent of the Church, unalterable. Should anyone, which God forbid, presume to contradict this our definition, let him be anathema." The words "we teach and define" are added by us for the sake of a better understanding of the Latin text.

In that Council, as its history teaches us, there were several bishops who conscientiously thought that the moment for declaring the infallibility of the Pope an article of Faith, was inopportune; they feared trouble for the Church and they ab-

stained from voting on that account. Only two bishops, it is said, voted against the decree; and after the voting, when the dogma had been proclaimed by the Holy Father, Pius IX, all the bishops of the world gave their assent to it, thereby making the decision unanimous. God be forever praised; for the unity of the Church in all matters of faith and morals, is now forever assured.

Let us see what the dogma teaches. It teaches, first, that Christ our Lord always intended His Church to be infallible, and therefore the Church always held that doctrine to be revealed; secondly, that the infallibility of the Church is enjoyed by the Roman Pontiff alone, when he defines "ex cathedra," or in other words, when he decides in the discharge of his supreme authority as pastor and teacher of the whole Church, a doctrine of faith and morals to be believed by all; thirdly, that the infallibility of the Pope depends not on the consent of the Church, but is of itself of such a nature that a truth declared by him as revealed is unalterable; and fourthly, that the necessary conclusion we deduced from the infallibility of the Church, which Catholics have always believed, is enjoyed likewise by the Pope, the successor of St. Peter, for the same infallible Church has now defined that the Pope enjoys the infallibility possessed by the whole Church. We conclude finally from the same decree that Peter and his successors in the See of Rome always were infallible when speaking "ex cathedra." Thus the Church of our day has promulgated anew the faith of the early Church which taught with St. Ireneus that all the churches of the world must conform to the Church of Rome, because in it are to be found in their integrity the traditions of the Apostles. (Cf. No. 116).

Does the Pope's infallibility extend to all subjects of knowledge? By no means: neither the Church nor the Pope is infallible in assertions or decisions relative to history or other human sciences. The Pope may write, in his capacity of learned Catholic author, on theology, on philosophy, and on other sciences; but although his opinion may have great weight as that of a scholar, he is infallible solely in matters of revealed truth and only when he teaches as head of the Church, discharging the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians.

There are two sources from which the Church draws her doctrine: viz., the Holy Scriptures and Tradition, (See Appendix) and in these two sources are found all revealed truths. But who can interpret the Holy Scriptures without fear of error, and who will infallibly decide whether or not any supposed truth of faith or morals is taught in the Scriptures or handed down by Tradition? None other than those to whom the deposit of faith has been confided, viz., the Church, and the Roman Pontiff when speaking "ex Cathedra."

The Church, or the Pope alone, in the conditions given, can also infallibly decide that certain teachings or opinions held among the faithful are contrary to revealed truth; and when certain assertions in writing or in speech are condemned by the Church, or by the Pope when speaking "ex cathedra", those that continue to hold or teach such condemned opinions, after they have obtained knowledge of the condemnation, are to be considered as heretics.

Let us note here that when books containing errors against faith or morals, are placed on the "Index", Catholics are forbidden under pain of mortal sin to read them. A book may be immoral without containing any errors contrary to revealed moral truth. Immoral books which excite the animal passions of our already corrupted nature, may not be read by anyone even by those who have a special permission to read heretical books, because it would be exposing oneself to the proximate danger of sinning mortally. In order that we may overcome the lustful desires of the flesh, we must shun their proximate occasions, for victory lies in flight.

Again, a book may be placed on the "Index" although it contains nothing against revealed truth, and although the book is of itself not immoral in its tendency; but if the author has written other works that are intrinsically heretical or immoral, all the works published by such author may be forbidden "in odio auctoris," i. e., the author himself becomes suspected as evil-minded; and since we are warned to avoid the company of the wicked, even if they are not wicked in all things, likewise should we shun the more dangerous companionship of all books written by those who have proved themselves to be enemies of God and of His Church.

131. What do you mean by the perpetuity of the Church?

By the perpetuity of the Church I mean that the Church, as Christ founded it, will last till the end of time.

The perpetuity or permanency of the Church is, for people who are acquainted at least partially with the history of Christianity, one of the strongest proofs of her divine origin, as we have noted already in the introduction to this lesson. If the Council of Constantinople did not name perpetuity among the marks of the Church, the reason is that it had at the time existed barely three and a half centuries, whilst now that the Church's per-

manency is proved by the fierce struggles of nearly nineteen centuries, from which the Church has always come out victorious, the mark of perpetuity becomes self-evident as proof of its divine institution. Every victory brings new lustre to the glory of the Church and a new assurance of her permanency. (Cfr. Wilmer's Handbook).

To what must be attributed the permanency of the Church and the glorious victories she has won over many enemies from within and without? Because Christ willed it so and clearly promised it. This is evident from the oft-quoted words in which Christ addressed Peter in the presence of the other Apostles, and in which He promised to choose Peter as the rock on which to build His Church: "Thou art Peter (rock) and upon this rock I shall build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." By the gates of hell not only Catholics but all serious Protestant interpreters understand the powers of hell or of darkness, the demons or devils of hell aided by their natural allies, the wicked of this world. Scripture compares the devils to roaring lions which go about at all times seeking whom they may devour, and their supreme efforts have always been directed towards the destruction of all that God has instituted as means of salvation, and principally towards the Church through which salvation is begun and effected. But their rage and superhuman energies are powerless before the Church, the citadel which Christ Himself has built. "The Church founded on a rock," says St. Jerome, "is not shaken by any tempest or overthrown by any tornado or by the winds."

The perpetuity of the Church was also promised by the Saviour when He commissioned His Apostles to teach all nations and added: "And behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 20). There is evidently question of a visible Church, as Christ imposes upon His Apostles the duty to teach and to baptize; this task will go on until the end of time, for Christ promises to be forever with His Apostles in the discharge of their duties.

Other passages of Scripture corroborate the permanency of the Church, as when Christ promised to send the Holy Ghost to abide with His Apostles forever (John xiv. 16, 17). But as most Protestant divines admit the perpetuity of the Church of God, although there are some who teach that the Catholic Church has been sometimes more and sometimes less visible, (Bapt. Con. ch. 27, par. 3) we need not aduce any further proofs of this truth from Scripture, much less from Tradition which is not disputed.

132. In whom are those attributes found in their fulness?

Those attributes are found in their fulness in the Pope, the visible head of the Church, whose infallible authority to teach bishops, priest and people in matters of faith and morals will last till the end of the world.

As the Church is to last until the end of time, the authority of the Apostolic See of Peter must likewise be permanent and perpetual; for the Church is built on Peter, the rock: take away Peter or the rock, i. e., the Apostolic See and the whole fabric crumbles and falls. Therefore, if perpetuity is the prerogative of the Church, it belongs also to Peter and his successors. This is but a natural consequence of Peter's supremacy and of all the occupants of his Apostolic See.

Take away Peter's supremacy, and you take away the center of unity of doctrine as well as of government; and confusion, turmoil, strife and pandemonium will reign instead, with all their consequences, viz., disintegration and utter ruin.

We have proved that the Sovereign Pontiff has been divinely commissioned to" feed the lambs and the sheep" of the flock, i. e., all the faithful, lay people, priests and bishops without exception. In matters of faith and morals, the Pope's authority to teach, and to teach infallibly when he speaks "ex cathedra", is also fully estabIshed; hence we must conclude that the three atrributes or prerogatives, namely: authority, infallibility and perpetuity, are found in their fulness, without dependence on the consent of the Church or of any human power, in the Pope, the visible head of the Church, whose infallible authority to teach bishops, priests and people, in matters of faith and morals, will last till the end of the world.

133. From whom does the Church derive its undying life and infallible authority?

134. By whom is the Church made and kept one, holy and catholic?

The Church is made and kept one, holy and catholic by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Love and Holiness, Who unites and sanctifies its members throughout the world.

All that tends to the eternal welfare of man since the Son of God redeemed him from sin and hell and merited for him the grace that justifies him as well as the means of sanctification, is attributed to the Holy Ghost, because He is the mutual love of the Father and the Son, than which nothing can be holier, since it is holiness itself. Thus the sanctification of souls is attributed to the Holy Ghost for the same reason that the creation is attributed to the Father and wisdom to the Son. Nevertheless, as we have explained already, the three Divine Persons are equally omnipotent, all-wise and all-holy, and all their external acts are common to the three Divine Persons. (Cf. No. 33).

There is another reason for which the work of our sanctification, although common to the three Divine Persons, is especially attributed to the Holy Ghost, and it is deduced from the teaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles regarding the Church instituted by Christ.

When our Saviour was still on earth, He promised His Apostles that He would send the Holy Ghost to abide with the Church forever. His mission would then end and the Holy Ghost was to continue the work for which Christ had come upon earth. Christ purchased our redemption with His sacred blood, and the infinite merits of His arduous life and sorrowful death were left to the Holy Ghost for distribution. Christ is the Author of our sanctification, and His Spirit, the Holy Ghost, distributes His gifts, of which He has become the depositor, to whomsoever He sees fit. This truth with all its consequences is based on the teaching of St. Paul concerning the Church as the mystical Body of Christ. (1 Cor. xiii. 3, sq.; Cf. Rom. xii. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 15).

All the members of the Church, the high and the

low, are one body with Christ, Who is its Head. They are not the real body of Christ, His flesh and bone, but together with Christ their Head, they form a mysterious union which is therefore called the mystical body of Christ; and it is not less real because it surpasses our comprehension The Communion of Saints naturally flows from it, as water from a copious source.

If all the members of the Church form one body with Christ, all His members live the same life, and the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Ghost, animates, fosters and promotes the spiritual growth of every member, governs, rules and sanctifies each one in particular and all in general. St. Augustine explains this mysterious action of the Holy Ghost in the Church, by comparing the mystical body of Christ to the natural union of our body and soul, for as body and soul are one man, the members of the mystical body of Christ are but one Church through the Holy Ghost that dwells in Her.

"Our spirit, by which every single man lives," he says, "is called the soul, and you see what the soul does in the body. It gives life to all its members, it sees by the eyes, it hears by the ears, it smells by the nose, it speaks by the tongue, it works by the hands, it walks by the feet, it assists at the same time all the members that they may live, it gives life to all, offices to each one. The eye hears not, the ear sees not, the tongue sees not, neither the ear nor the eye speaks, and notwithstanding each one lives; the ear lives, the tongue lives; offices are different, but life is common to all."

"Such is the Church of God; through some members she works miracles, through other saints she speaks the truth, through others she preserves virginity, and through others again she maintains conjugal chastity; through one, one thing and through another, something else, each one does what is proper to it, but all live alike. Thus what the soul is to man's body, the Holy Ghost is to the body of Christ, His Church, the very thing which the soul does in all the members of one body." (Serm.

267, No. 4). Ss. Peter Damian and Gregory the Great fully confirm St. Augustine's teaching.

Nothing could be added to the foregoing quotation, that would more fully demonstrate what the catechism teaches in the two preceding questions and answers, for it is only a consequence or corollary of the doctrine of St. Paul regarding the Church as the mystical body of Christ. Thus the Church owes her undying life and infallible authority to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth and Holiness, Who abides with her forever and Who will maintain her unity, holiness and catholicity until time is no more.

Part II.

INTRODUCTION

We come now to the second part of the catechism, the part that treats of the Sacraments.

Revealed truth, proposed to our belief by Holy Church, has been so far the subject-matter of our study, and the Apostles' Creed, which contains the chief truths of our belief, has served us as a guide. Some of these truths of which we gained knowledge, are called mysteries, because they surpass all our understanding. Some are supernatural, that is, knowledge of them could not be acquired by the natural powers of our soul without revelation from God. Some are natural truths which could have come to our knowledge by the efforts of our mind, but which were also revealed in a supernatural manner. All these truths we believe equally on the authority of God Himself, for they all belong to the deposit of faith left to the Church by Christ, our Saviour.

We now enter upon a new study, that which teaches us what we must do to save our souls; but before we take up the Commandments—following in this the order of the catechism—we shall take up the doctrine of the Sacraments, which are as a means to an end, that is, among other benefits, they enable us, through the graces they confer, to keep and observe all the Commandments of God.

The natural and logical order in the study of Christian Doctrine favors the division of the catechism into three parts: the first part relates to faith, the second to hope, and the third to charity. Faith is the foundation of our hope and of charity, for it is faith that teaches us all we may expect of the Divine Goodness, and what we must do to save our souls. Hope refers to two things, namely, the eternal happiness and the means to attain it; and these means again are twofold: 1st, the Sacraments, without some of which we would not be admitted into everlasting glory, merited for us by our Saviour; and secondly, the observance of the Commandments, or the service which God demands of us, as a condition of our reward hereafter.

From the foregoing we conclude that the first part of the catechism should contain all that God has taught us to believe, and, although it is indifferent which means of salvation are taken up first, the Sacraments or the Commandments, nevertheless it is more logical to speak of the Sacraments first: hope comes before charity, and the Sacraments may be considered as

instruments, placed at our disposition, to serve God properly by obeying His holy will.

We will find a still greater reason for placing the doctrine of the Sacraments before that of the Commandments, when we consider that, because of original sin, we are born "children of wrath", and our service cannot be meritorious of heavenly reward until we have been regenerated by Baptism; or, if we have grievously offended God after Baptism, until our sins are remitted in the Sacrament of Penance.

Moreover, the Sacraments are indispensable, because the natural faculties of the soul have been impaired by the fall of our first parents, Adam and Eve, whose vitiated state or condition we have inherited; and therefore we could not without a special help of God, offered us in the Sacraments, keep all the Commandments for a long time. The corruption of our nature has not been such that we have lost thereby our free will of action, as some heretics, especially among the so-called Reformers of the sixteenth century, have maintained. True, our intellect has been obscured and our will weakened; but man retains his faculty to judge between good and evil, and the free will to choose between them; hence man's responsibility remains; but does this mean that man left to himself could by his natural powers keep all the Commandments during his whole life? We are taught differently, and the history of the world from the time of Adam and Eve to the coming of the Saviour, confirms the teaching of the Church on that point. Remember the deluge and its cause; remember the state of the world soon after the deluge, and the general depravity among all nations when Christ appeared upon the scene.

In order to keep alive among the Jewish people the belief in the trut God and the hope of the Redeemer promised to Adam and Eve, they alone were preserved from the general corruption, but at what cost? To speak in a human way, God's patience must have been taxed to the point of exhaustion. Threats often repeated, dire punishments, the sending of messengers to forewarn the wicked, were barely able to delay for a time the certain ruin impending upon God's chosen people. Destruction finally came upon them when they had rejected the last proof of His predilection, the Saviour, Who alone could regenerate and save them. The good God be forever praised for the compassion He has manifested towards us, when He instituted for the whole human race those means of regeneration and of preservation from present evil and eternal ruin, which we call Sacraments. They will forever remain as monuments of His fatherly love and of His tender compassion, as well as of His incomprehensible mercy and of His design to save man from eternal ruin and to lead him to an endless happiness.

Faith, hope and charity have their distinct fields of spiritual influence. To the domain of faith belongs all revealed truth; to the domain of hope, the happiness of heaven and all the means to attain it, and charity has mainly for its work of love all that God has commanded directly, or indirectly through His Church.

Heaven, or eternal bliss, promised as a reward in God's service, will be considered in the last lesson of the Catechism; this second part contains solely the means Our Saviour has instituted in order that man may be able to do God's will in all things and thereby obtain the promised reward; the Commandments will form the subject of the third part of this work.

If you ask, what influence the virtue of hope has with respect to the Sacraments, we can easily find it in the answer to the question "What is Hope?", for hope is a virtue by which we firmly trust that God will give us eternal life and the means to obtain it. As the Sacraments are the principal means to arrive at our eternal destiny, we must necessarily conclude that the virtue of hope induces us to trust firmly that God will give us the necessary Sacraments for salvation. That trust in God should awaken in us a desire to receive these excellent means of grace, as indispensable for salvation. This desire grows with the knowledge of their nature, their efficacy and their effects, and hence we understand how necessary the serious study of the Sacraments is for us, not only as a means of salvation but also as a proffered help towards the perfection of our soul.

LESSON THE THIRTEENTH

ON THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

Before beginning the study of the Sacraments, we should see what we may consider in them. We may consider three things in them, according to St. Thomas: first, their origin; secondly, their perfection or excellence; and thirdly, their end which is twofold: they justify us here below, and by so doing they bring us to our final end, eternal happiness in heaven.

136. What is a Sacrament?

A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

The meaning of the word "sacrament," if we judge from its etymology, is a sacred intention or a sacred thing—"sacra" (holy) and "mens" (mind). At the time when Christianity was superseding Paganism, the popular idea conveyed by the word was that of a sacred engagement or oath, taken by those enter-

ing into the Roman army. Hence among the Christians it was adopted to designate the sacred mysteries or rites, by which catechumens entered into the service of the true God, or having already enlisted, received at various times help from heaven to occupy with dignity any position or render any service in the army of which Christ is the leader and captain, to fight under His banner, and to vanquish His enemies and the enemies of our salvation, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

There is here no question of the sacraments of the Old Law, like circumcision, which according to a common opinion among learned theologians, had the efficacy of forgiving original sin, or of the other ceremonies and sacrifices of the Mosaic Law. We are concerned here only with the Sacraments of the New Law of Grace under which we live, and which is imposed upon all who desire to save their souls.

In the answer here given: "A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace," there are five things to be considered: first, it is an outward sign; secondly, it was instituted by Christ; thirdly, it was instituted to give grace; fourthly, the sign in each Sacrament must signify or determine the special grace attached to each Sacrament; and fifthly, the Sacrament gives the grace, which it signifies, by some inherent power, attached to the outward sign by Christ Himself, or as theologians call it: "ex opere operato," i. e., by performing the work which Christ has instituted.

1st. It is an outward sign, i. e., a sign that falls under our senses, and since the sense of hearing and the sense of sight are the surest and safest to ascertain the reality of what goes on about us, it was proper—considering the importance and dignity of a Sacrament,—that Christ should have chosen outward signs appealing mainly to those two senses. There are many signs in use among men, and by them we understand some truths brought to our knowledge, which otherwise we would not have known. Thus we see a ship at a distance, floating on the waters of the ocean, and when it is sufficiently near, we may detect its funnel and the smoke issuing therefrom; later we notice the "Stars and Stripes," unfurled to the breeze; and when it approaches still nearer, we may notice turrets with formidable guns protruding. Now the smoke from the funnels, the flag and the guns are signs that the ship is moved by steam, that it is owned by the American government, and finally that it is a man-of-war in the service of the government. Words are signs, for they stand for notions or ideas, which they signify.

It is evident that not all signs are Sacraments, for other signs have not the other four qualities that make up a Sacrament.

2nd. Instituted by Christ. Christ, Our Saviour, being God equal to His Father, can attach to outward signs the power to produce in our souls supernatural effects of grace. All outward signs producing grace are not always Sacraments; sacramentals like holy water, blessed candles, etc., are not Sacraments, because they were not instituted by Christ, but by His Church.

3rd. To give grace. By grace we understand a supernatural gift of God, bestowed upon us through the merits of Jesus Christ for our salvation. The effects of the Sacraments surpass, then, all the powers of man; no king or emperor can grant the smallest supernatural grace, however mighty he may be. The Sacraments alone can give it by divine institution. The priests of the Church have not received the power of granting a single grace, except through the Sacraments; even the Vicar of Christ upon earth, though he may forgive the temporal punishment due to our sins, by substituting a lighter for a severer punshment, as when he grants indulgences, cannot confer supernatural graces.

Not all signs instituted by our Lord give grace; so the sign of the cross, which with good reason we may think was instituted by Christ, is not a Sacrament; because its purpose is not to bestow grace,—although it may excite in us pious affections that will bring grace to us—but to serve principally as a sign to distinguish the true followers of the Saviour, and to move our hearts with sentiments of devotion for Him, Who by His cross redeemed the world. The four marks of the Church: unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity are signs of her divine origin, but they are not Sacraments; for although we may receive many graces through the Church to which they point as the true Church of Christ, still these marks are in themselves not sources of grace.

4th. The sign in each Sacrament must determine and signify the special grace bestowed therein.

The meaning of this effect, proper to the Sacraments, is that the Sacraments not only bestow different graces, but that the particular graces which they bestow are determined by the outward signs; so that people who witness what is done and said by the minister of the Sacrament, may understand what grace is conferred on the recipient. This will become evident when the nature and the effects of each Sacrament have been fully explained, and when the outward sign of each is fully understood. One example will suffice for the present: In Baptism water is poured on the head of the person to be baptized, while he that baptizes says at the same time: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Now what grace does this signify and determine? Surely it cannot mean anything else but a pouring into the soul of that

grace which cleanses it from all sin and stain of sin. The water, the ablution, the words "I baptize," and the invocation of the Blessed Trinity signify the effects.

5th. The Sacraments give grace of their own efficient power, attached to the outward sign by Christ Himself, or, "ex opere operato." The Council of Trent teaches this clearly, when it says that "all the Sacraments confer grace on those who do not place an obstacle in their way." (Sess. 5, Can. 6; 7). And the decree of the Council of Florence for Armenians has it thus: "The Sacraments contain and confer grace upon those who receive them worthily." From these decisions of the Church we learn that, as we have explained above, the Sacraments contain and confer grace of their own power, i. e., through the institution of Christ; and furthermore that the dispositions required of the recipient are that, on his part, he should not put any obstacle to the effects or graces of the Sacraments, and that this is "to receive them worthily." The efficacy, then, of the Sacraments does not in any way depend on the merit of the authorized minister who confers them, as if their effects depend on the work done by him, i. e., "ex opere operantis": all that is required from the authorized minister is, that he act not in mimicry or in jest; but with the intention to do what Christ has instituted and what the Catholic Church practices.

Of what does the sign consist, or what are its elements and composing parts? In the outward sign of a Sacrament there are two elements, viz., matter and form. By matter we understand here not only material things, such as water, oil or bread, but anything else that is done visibly, even an outward action may become a sign, when words which accompany the action, fully determine its meaning. The form, or the words, complete the sign, or determine the specific sign of each Sacrament. If we take Baptism for an example, the physical matter used is natural water; the outward action of pouring the water on the head may mean a simple ablution for cleanliness' sake, or it may be an action to refresh the head; but add the words, "I baptize thee," the sign is complete, preventing all misunderstanding as to what it signifies; hence we learn why the words used in conferring the Sacraments are called the form, or determining element of the matter.

Hence both matter and form togetther make the outward sign. The first falls under the sense of sight and

the second under that of hearing—two senses that are most frequently in use and in themselves are most proper to bring to our knowledge any outward manifestation.

137. How many Sacraments are there?

There are seven Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony.

This answer teaches us several things: first, that Christ instituted outward signs to impart grace to our souls. Could not our Saviour have instituted internal proofs of the grace He wished to bestow? Undoubtedly. He has chosen in preference outward signs, because this conforms better to our nature; our body as well as our soul is thus made to participate in rendering the honor and worship due to the Divine Majesty. Again, by this choice our good God gives another proof of His affection for us, for He has adopted the easiest and most certain means of assuring us of the reception of His supernatural gifts, for proofs of His powerful love towards us are more easily and more certainly known to all by external than by internal signs. Furthermore, by these signs His infinite wisdom invites us to the practice of many virtues, viz., humility in submitting ourselves to His holy will by trampling human respect under foot. By them we also make a public profession of our faith as when we take part in religious worship. Finally the outward signs are a great help to instruct us in the nature of grace and its effect upon the soul, for nothing impresses us more than sensible signs, especially so, when they are apt to raise us from material and visible things to what is immaterial, invisible and supernatural.

We are also taught by the answer in this number that there are seven Sacraments, neither more nor less. When we examine the belief of many of the so-called Christian religions, scattered over the world, with respect to the number of the Sacraments, we find that the Protestant churches are the only ones that have rejected several or all. The so-called High Church Episcopal-

ians hold that there are only three Sacraments, viz.: Baptism, Confirmation and the Lord's Supper. But they seem inclined to retire from their untenable position, for they regard the other four Sacraments as sacramental rites; at least such is the distinction found in some of their catechisms. We shall not quarrel about words; for it is immaterial whether or not the word sacrament (sacramentum) used by the Latin Christians is preferable to the word mystery (mysterion) used by the Greeks. Likewise we would not quarrel with the Episcopalians, if they differed from us only in giving different names to the different Sacraments. The meaning alone is what counts. We assert that Latins, Greeks and Armenians, although using different names, agree not only as to the number but also as to the effects of the Sacraments.

The Catholic Church teaches that there are seven Sacraments and no more or less; and for Catholics no further proof is necessary, because it is a matter of faith, and in such matters we believe the Church cannot err. But this subject is of so much importance that the sources of the Church's doctrine should be carefully examined. The two sources on which the teaching of the Church rests, are Holy Scripture and Tradition.

Holy Scripture mentions all the Sacraments although not under the same name. But their effects are shown to us, or at least the sacred rite can be easily understood to be the same as the one in use in the Catholic Church.

Baptism is clearly taught: (Mat. xxviii. 19; Acts viii, 36, 38; St. John iii. 5). Of Confirmation we find mention made as a rite that gives the Holy Ghost; (Acts viii. 15, 16; also xix. 6). Of the Holy Eucharist as being the Body and Blood of Our Lord frequent mention is made; (Mat. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22, 24; Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. x. 16, also xi. 24, etc.). For Penance or the power of forgiving sins promised and given to the Apostles, see the Gospels of Matthew and John; (Mat. xvi. 19; also xviii. 18; John xx. 22, 23). Of Extreme Unction as forgiving the sins of the sick, mention is made by St. James; (James v. 14, 15). Holy Orders are spoken of in Luke xxii. 19, and John xx. 22; and a ceremony of ordination is referred to in Acts vi. 6; Acts xiii. 3; Acts xiv. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6. Marriage among Christians or Matrimony is mentioned by St. Paul as a sacred rite or mystery of which the union of love between God and His Church is typical (Eph. v. 31). It must be admitted that these citations do not explicitly refer to the Sacraments as outward signs of grace, as explained by the Church; nevertheless they are not without some weight, for the Catholic exposition of the texts referred to conforms in all respects to the teachings of the Fathers of the Church and to the constant Tradition from the apostolic times to our days.

The constant belief of the Church that Christ instituted seven Sacraments is an irrefragable proof that the doctrine was handed down by the Apostles to their successors and their disciples. Even if the first centuries of the Church offer us no positive proof of that tradition, the argument remains conclusive, when we consider that the belief in the seven Sacraments was unanimous in the twelfth century, and that even among heretics, who separated from the Church in the first centuries after the apostolic times, the teaching agrees with that of the Catholic Church. The oldest rituals in existence give us the mode of conferring the seven Sacraments. The Council of Rheims, about the first quarter of the seventh century, regulates their administration. The Council of Florence in the beginning of the thirteenth century, in its decree for Armenians already cited, determines their number and the grace they confer.

Now, whence that universal consent among all Christians, Protestants excepted? Would the heretics who left the Church have borrowed their doctrine from her after their defection? If the Catholic Church did not receive its doctrine of the Sacraments from the Apostles, at what time did the innovation begin? Would an addition of even one Sacrament be possible without opposition from heretics as well as from Catholics themselves?

This argument of prescription will be proved still more conclusively when each Sacrament has been fully explained, and proved by Holy Scripture, as understood by the early Fathers, as well as by constant Tradition.

Lastly, the number of the Sacraments may in some manner be determined by comparing the necessities of man according to his natural life, to those corresponding to his supernatural life, i. e., of man as raised by God to the supernatural state of grace in view of his supernatural destiny. We have learned that man was created innocent and holy (see No. 40). He lost that innocence and holiness through his disobedience, and we inherit with the guilt of original sin his unhappy state and vitiated nature. Since God did not abandon man after he fell into sin, but promised him a Redeemer, Who would reinstate Adam and his posterity in their original life of grace, by what means are we restored to the friendship of God? By the merits of the Redeemer attached to some outward sign. We have already said that God could have chosen some other means than outward signs to give us the graces necessary for salvation; but as in His goodness and wisdom, He has seen fit to employ outward signs for convincing us of His gifts, the Catechism of the Council of Trent teaches us the fitness and propriety of seven Sacraments, by analogy between the necessity of man's supernatural life and his natural life as a social being.

In order to exist, to preserve his existence and to contribute to his own and to the public good, seven things are necessary

for man: to be born, to grow, to be nurtured, to be cared for when sick, to be strengthened when weak, to be governed by lawful authority, to respect the just laws for public and individual welfare, finally to perpetuate himself and his species by legitimate offsprings. Now the necessities of man, if he is to be raised to the supernatural life, are analogous to those mentioned for his natural life. By Baptism we begin to live the life of grace; by Confirmation we are strengthened spiritually and grow in the grace of God; by the Holy Eucharist our souls are nourished with the true bread from Heaven; by Penance our sick soul receives spiritual life lost by sin; by Extreme Unction our spiritual weakness, the remains of sin, is taken away; by Holy Orders legitimate authority is conferred to rule the Church, the flock of Christ, in spiritual matters, and Matrimony consecrates the union of man and woman, for the conservation of the Church and the education of children in the knowledge of the Christian Religion and of the service we owe to God as our Creator and Redeemer. (St. Thos. P. II, q. 65, a. 1).

From the foregoing we rightly infer that the Council of Trent only voiced the universal and constant belief of the Church from apostolic times down to our day, when it decreed that there are seven Sacraments, not more nor less. (Sess. 7 on Sac., Can 1).

138. Whence have the Sacraments the power of giving grace?

The Sacraments have the power of giving grace through the merits of Jesus Christ.

In the answer to the preceding question we explained that the Sacraments confer grace on those who place no obstacle in the way, or in other words, on those who receive them worthily. Now, the catechism asks: Whence that power? How can mute outward signs give supernatural grace, a gift that surpasses all power on earth, even the power of angels? And the answer is, that this power of giving grace was given to the Sacraments through the merits of Jesus Christ.

All supernatural grace that has ever been conferred on man since the fall of Adam and Eve, and that ever will be conferred on any human being, comes from the merits of the Redeemer. Even the extraordinary and unique privilege of the Immaculate Conception was bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin in view of the merits of her divine Son, Jesus. There was a twofold object in the Redemption: the satisfaction of God's justice and

the gaining of grace for man. The merits of the Saviour, Who is God and man, are an inexhaustible treasure of grace, and God attaches that grace to whatever He wills. But man since the fall could not merit the slightest grace unless he were first restored to the supernatural life, forfeited by Adam's disobedience. That supernatural life of grace, according to God's just designs, was to be granted only through the merits of the Redeemer. Hence we see clearly that, as the power of giving supernatural grace was attached to the outward signs of the Sacraments, this power comes from Jesus Christ. (No. 102).

The power of giving grace which the Sacraments contain and confer, may well be compared to the words of Christ, when He said: "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." These words undoubtedly forgave the sins of the believing leper; and why? Because they were the words representing or signifying the will of the God-man, Who has the power to forgive sins. Likewise the outward signs of the Sacraments are Christ's words and acts, for they are done in His name by the minister of the Sacrament, and when He instituted the Sacraments He applied to them the merit and the power that His own words and deeds would have had; but with this difference that the recipient of the Sacrament must place no obstacle to its effects and the minister must act in Christ's name, that is, must have the intention to do what Christ instituted or His Church practices. In the case of the leper, Christ knew the man's disposition, and He spoke in His own name; and, therefore, His words could not fail to produce their effect.

139. What grace do the Sacraments give?

Some of the Sacraments give sanctifying grace, and others increase it in our soul.

There is question here only of that grace, that quality of the soul, which makes it holy and pleasing to God and delightful to all the spirits of heaven. It is a participation in the divine nature, according to the teaching of St. Peter, and is to the soul a beginning of eternal glory. We call it sanctifying grace, because it sanctifies the sinner and not only takes the guilt from the soul, but besides bestows on it that quality which

makes it holy. It is also called "habitual grace," because it is inherent in the soul until it is lost by mortal sin; and thus we distinguish it from actual grace, which is simply a help or aid from God to avoid a sinful act or to do what is good. Hence sanctifying grace is also the supernatural life of the soul, because by it we lead a life of grace, which tends to eternal life and without it our soul is, as it were, dead by sin. This latter miserable state not only entails the loss of sanctifying grace, but also leads to eternal death.

This preamble, which is only a repetition of what has been explained more fully in No. 103, is considered necessary, because the expressions: sanctifying grace, habitual grace, supernatural life, justification, sanctification, etc., will be frequently in use in the second part of this catechism.

The catechism teaches us that all the Sacraments give sanctifying grace: they give it to those bereft of it by original or mortal sin, and then it is called "first sanctifying grace"; they bestow it as well on those who are already in the state of grace, and thus increase sanctifying grace in the soul, and this increase is called "second sanctifying grace," or simply "second grace."

The Sacraments give sanctifying grace or increase it, and that immediately, by their own power. In this respect they differ again from actual graces which the Sacraments do not give at the moment of their reception, giving only the right to them, as will be more fully explained in the next question.

We should bear in mind that sanctifying grace can be increased indefinitely. It may be truly considered the treasure of the soul, which should never be diminished, and should be scrupulously guarded. By sin alone it can be partially or totally lost. Venial sin gradually diminishes the treasure, and mortal sin robs the soul of it in an instant. On the contrary, the Sacraments, as often as we receive them worthily, and other means of grace, like prayer, devotion and good works, add constantly to this precious spiritual treasure. But here also we see the supereminent and most beneficent effect of the Sacraments that God bestows upon man; for although prayer, the sacramentals, devotions and good works add to the sacred treasure, they cannot give the first sanctifying grace bestowed upon us by Baptism and after Baptism by Penance, whilst the Sacraments give both first and second graces and confer them infallibly, as has been explained above.

140. Which are the Sacraments that give sanctifying grace?

The Sacraments that give sanctifying grace are Baptism and Penance, and they are called Sacraments of the Dead.

This question and answer are to be understood in the light of the previous number; for all the Sacraments give sanctifying grace: either as the "first grace" or as an increase of grace, called "second grace." The nature of both graces, the "first" and "second grace" is the same. There is a difference only in the recipient, for if the recipient is still under the guilt of original sin, he is destitute of sanctifying grace, and likewise, if he has lost it by mortal sin. In both cases, he receives the first sanctifying grace. But if he has never lost his baptismal innocence, do the Sacraments he may receive remain without effect? Undoubtedly not, for the Sacraments always produce their effect, if the recipient is well disposed; consequently, in that case, they confer the second grace. From this we conclude that, although the Sacrament of Penance was instituted mainly to forgive mortal sin, he who is not in mortal sin cannot be deprived of the grace of the Sacrament. It forgives also venial sin, for Christ, Our Lord, made no distinction in the guilt when He said "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them. Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." Even with regard to Baptism, the recipient may be in the state of grace, through the desire of Baptism, which he could not actually receive before. But in either case the desire must be accompanied with faith in the teachings of the Church, and with a perfect love of God, coupled with the detestation of his sins. In case the "first sanctifying grace" is already bestowed upon him before the sacramental rite of Baptism is administered and if he afterwards receives the Baptism of water, as he must as soon as he has the opportunity, the Sacrament will confer the "second sanctifying grace" or an increase of sanctifying grace.

141. Why are Baptism and Penance called Sacraments of the Dead?

Baptism and Penance are called Sacraments of the Dead, because they take away mortal sin which is the death of the soul, and because they give grace, which is its life.

By "mortal sin" in this answer is understood not only mortal sin considered as an actual sin, but the state of sin, whether caused by original sin or by actual mortal sin; for in either state of sin we are deprived of the supernatural life of the soul.

In order to understand the nature of sanctifying grace better we must keep in mind that there is in the soul a twofold life, the natural life and the supernatural life. The natural life of the soul may be impaired in its two principal faculties, intellect and will, by actual sin, and the more so on account of its union in one person with the body; for original sin has impaired the natural faculties of both body and soul, as we have seen (No. 51), and actual sin may by degrees also diminish the natural vitality of the intellect and will, as well as feed and excite the animal passions, which impair still further those noble faculties. But the effects of grace and sin on the natural faculties of our being are slow and not so easily detected; besides we are not now concerned with the natural strength of body and soul; the supernatural life of the soul alone is here considered, since the soul by nature is immortal and cannot be destroyed by the act of man, but by the act of the Creator only. The supernatural life of the soul is a free gift of God bestowed in Baptism, and it can be weakened or totally destroyed by our own acts, as it can be regained when lost, or simply increased if not.

This supernatural life is nothing else than sanctifying grace. If it exists in the soul, the soul lives supernaturally; if it does not, the soul, having lost sanctifying grace or supernatural life, is spiritually dead.

This loss of grace is not the only effect of original or mortal sin: there is besides the guilt of sin, that is, a deformity of the soul caused by mortal sin and found in us in a slight degree even at our birth, because of original sin which we inherit.

Baptism and Penance restore us to grace, taking away the guilt of sin which caused its loss. Hence the unbaptized remain deprived of supernatural life, and he that has the guilt of mortal sin on his conscience is

also deprived of it; both are spiritually dead and, therefore, the two Sacraments which restore that life are rightly called Sacraments of the Dead, as they restore the dead to supernatural life.

In No. 55, when speaking of the effects of mortal sin, we said that mortal sin, besides taking away the supernatural life of the soul, renders the soul incapable of gaining any merit for heaven, and, therefore, all good works that are done whilst one is in that state, are lost and lost forever. No real merit is attached to such works, and all they may obtain is the grace of conversion; not that they can merit it, but they may move the merciful God to grant it.

The Sacraments of the Dead, besides restoring the supernatural life of the soul, give it also the power to merit again for heaven. From this we understand what an injury a sinner does to himself, when, having fallen into mortal sin, he hastens not to avail himself of the first opportunity to reconcile himself with his Father in heaven by the Sacrament of Penance, or, if he be not baptized, to have recourse to the Sacrament of Baptism. Let us also remember that although the sinner loses by mortal sin all the merits of his good works obtained whilst in the state of grace, the Sacrament of Penance restores all those merits and nothing is lost, except the merit of the good actions performed in the state of mortal sin.

142. Which are the Sacraments that increase sanctifying grace in the soul?

The Sacraments that increase sanctifying grace in the soul are: Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony, and they are called Sacraments of the Living.

In the answer to the two preceding questions we have been taught that the two Sacraments that give sanctifying grace, called "first grace" if we have it not, also forgive the sins that have deprived us of sanctifying grace. These two Sacraments were, then, instituted for two reasons, viz., to wash away the stain and guilt of sin, and also to restore us to the friendship of God by giving us the "first grace," through which supernatural life is given back to the soul.

In this number we are taught that there are also Sacraments that give sanctifying grace to the souls al-

ready in possession of it. What utility can there be in a Sacrament that gives what we have already? This question is misleading. True, they who wish to receive one of these five Sacraments, viz., Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony, must be in the state of sanctifying grace, but that grace can be increased indefinitely; and that is precisely what these Sacraments can do. They increase sanctifying grace, and in order the better to distinguish this effect from the grace received in the other Sacraments, we call that increase "second grace." Again, that sanctifying grace, called "first grace", which is received in Baptism or Penance, needs to be preserved. How hopeless would be the sruggle against the enemies that continually assault the soul in order to rob it of its great treasure, sanctifying grace and supernatural life, without help from on high in the unequal combat? There are, it is true, besides the Sacraments, other means of preserving the grace of God, such as prayers and devotions, internal and external worship; but these, although they keep alive in us the effects of the Sacraments, would not be sufficient, without the Sacraments, to preserve the supernatural life of the soul and to fortify it against all temptations. Our mind has been so obscured and our will so weakened, that without the Sacraments it is morally impossible to preserve our innocence, even after our sins have been washed away by the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

When Our Lord instituted more than two sacraments it was in view of our weakness and He manifested thereby His exceedingly great love and His boundless compassion for His children in their miserable and helpless condition. They who have abandoned the practice of their holy Religion cannot appreciate His loving kindness; but it is well understood by those who have been among His favored ones and who have devoutly received the Sacraments necessary to their state of life and have availed themselves frequently of those that can be received more than once. These, I say, are fully aware of the salutary effects of the Sacraments and they are deeply grateful for their institution.

143. Why are Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony called Sacraments of the Living?

Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony are called Sacraments of the Living, because those who receive them worthily are already living the life of grace.

All the Sacraments except Baptism and Penance are Sacraments of the Living, i. e., Sacraments that can be received only by the living. By the "living" we mean those who are already living the life of grace, as the catechism says. Since man, in the person of his progenitors Adam and Eve, was raised to supernatural life, and Christ, our Saviour, merited it again for us after its loss by their fall, there are but two states or conditions compatible with those fundamental truths of our holy Religion: our soul is either supernaturally dead or supernatural living. The dead, as we have explained, are those who lack the life-giving grace. These may not receive any of the five Sacraments of the Living, but must have recourse to either the Sacrament of Baptism or of Penance to obtain the life-giving grace. But the living, that is, those who have been regenerated supernaturally by Baptism and have preserved their Baptismal innocence, or, if mortal sin has deprived them for a time of supernatural life, have been restored to the friendship of God in the Sacrament of Penance, are invited to partake of the Sacraments of the Living.

144. What sin does he commit who receives the Sacraments of the Living in mortal sin?

He who receives the Sacraments of the Living in mortal sin, commits a sacrilege, which is a great sin, because it is an abuse of a sacred thing.

He who receives the Sacraments of the Living in mortal sin, commits a sacrilege, because it is an abuse of a holy rite instituted by Christ, and, therefore, one of

the greatest insults that can be offered to the all-holy, all-loving God.

When we say that it is a sacrilege to receive a Sacrament of the Living in mortal sin, it must be understood that the recipient is aware that he is in the state of mortal sin and that the Sacrament is one of those that may not be received except in the state of grace. Therefore, one who is not in the state of grace, must before he receives any of the Sacraments of the Living be first baptized or if he has been baptized already, he must have recourse to the Sacrament of Penance. Besides all those about to receive a Sacrament of the Living, should prepare themselves for its reception by an act of perfect contrition, in order to avoid even the least danger of receiving the Sacrament in mortal sin, and should include in their act of contrition venial as well as mortal sins, so as to assure for themselves the largest share of graces the Sacrament confers by itself, together with an increase of grace due to our good disposition and fervor.

Venial sin is not an obstacle to the effect of the Sacraments of the Living. On the contrary, these forgive venial sin, not directly, but indirectly, for according to St. Thomas, no Sacrament was directly instituted by Christ to forgive venial sin. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 65, a. 1 to 8). The Sacraments, nevertheless, confer an increase of grace, and grace itself removes venial sin from the soul. Venial sin although not in itself an obstacle to the Sacraments of the Living may diminish their salutary effects, especially so, if the recipient have a so-called affection for one or several venial sins. Such a disposition would be found in him who makes light of venial sin, or is unwilling to avoid it, and, therefore, has no sorrow for having committed it. St. Thomas tells us that venial sin can be forgiven without the infusion of grace, and, vice versa, grace may be conferred on a soul without remitting the guilt of venial sin. Even one species of venial sin may be forgiven without having the same effect on other venial sins for which the recipient feels no compunction of heart, but has rather an affection for it. This explains how there are people who frequent the Sacraments and keep up a slight aversion toward one or more particular persons. Mortal sin and sanctifying grace cannot abide together in the same soul; but venial sin and grace do often dwell together, although they are opposed to each other as light to darkness. There are many shades and degrees of light, but if it were possible to shut out all direct and reflected light, total darkness would prevail: hence we conclude that an affection for venial sin may become an obstacle to the effects of the Sacraments of the Living, so that these bestow but the minimum share of the graces they would have conferred with better dispositions and greater devotion on the part of the recipient.

Although, as we have explained, the Sacraments of the Living do not confer the "first grace," for which Baptism and Penance have been instituted, it may be piously believed that these five Sacraments do by accident, in particular cases, confer the "first grace," for example, if one would approach a Sacrament of the Living thinking himself to be in the state of grace, when in realty he is not; as in the case of a person who, being guilty of a mortal sin since his last confession, forgets that fact and, therefore, does not go to confession or excite in his heart an act of perfect contrition. In such an ignorance of his state and in similar cases, St. Thomas considers it more than probable that an imperfect contrition in the penitent would be sufficient, and the reason therefor is that the Sacraments always produce grace, if the recipient places no obstacle in the way, i. e., if he receives the Sacrament at least with ordinary devotion.

This opinion is held by all theologians, and in practice it must be followed, when there is question of administering Extreme Unction to the dying who are deprived of their senses.

All that is destined for the service and worship of God, such as persons, places and things, are holy and therefore, to be reveerenced. Hence all disrespect shown them is injurious to God's honor and glory and constitutes a sacrilege. The holier the thing, the greater the irreverence and sacrilege. If the two sons of Aaron were destroyed by fire, because they put strange fire in a censor, contrary to the law of Moses; if two Israelites were struck dead for touching the Ark which was toppling over; if Baltassar, the king, lost his life and kingdom because he had used in a banquet the sacred vessels, which Nabuchodonosor, his grandfather, had brought from the temple of Jerusalem—what punishment shall be due to those that desecrate the Sacraments, instituted by Christ Himself for the sanctification of our souls! And if this applies to all the Sacraments of the living, what an atrocious crime is committed by him who receives the Holy Eucharist in the state of mortal sin!

145. Besides sanctifying grace do the Sacraments give any other grace?

Besides sanctifying grace the Sacraments give another grace called sacramental grace.

Let us first recall that there are two kinds of grace, sanctifying grace and actual grace. So far, we have spoken only of sanctifying grace, conferred by the Sacraments, and we have learned that all the Sacraments give either the "first grace," if the well-disposed recipient is not in the state of grace, or the "second grace," that is, an increase of sanctifying grace, if the recipient is already in the state of grace at the time the Sacrament is conferred on him.

Now the answer to the present question teaches us that the Sacraments give another grace, called sacramental. In the lesson on grace (No. 104) two kinds of graces were mentioned, sanctifying and actual grace, but sanctifying grace is not an actual grace, for the latter first moves the soul and co-operates with its efforts to perform good and virtuous actions. In the next answer we shall explain in what sacramental grace consists.

If the Sacraments conferred only sanctifying grace, three Sacraments at most would be necessary for the spiritual or supernatural life of the soul, which is nothing else than sanctifying grace, viz., Baptism, to bestow the supernatural life that washes away the stain of original sin; Penance to restore supernatural life to the soul deprived of it by mortal sin, and then a third Sacrament to increase that supernatural life.

Since Our Lord did not institute three Sacraments but seven, we must necessarily conclude that the Sacraments confer some special and distinct grace, called sacramental grace, for sanctifying grace is essentially alike in all Sacraments, whether the "first" or "second" grace is conferred; and if there be an essential difference between the five Sacraments of the Living, it is principally to be found in the particular sacramental grace given in each one. When we now examine the matter and form of the Sacraments, we shall see that in Baptism and Penance the outward sign rather signifies the gift of sanctifying grace, although special sacramental graces are also attached to them; but as to a Sacrament of the Living, it rather signifies the kind of sacramental grace bestowed by each one, as we shall explain more fully when we come to the outward signs of the Sacraments; for the effects common to all the Sacraments are only two, viz., sanctifying grace and a vested right to distinct sacramental graces.

146. What is sacramental grace?

Sacramental grace is a special help which God gives, to attain the end for which He instituted each Sacrament.

In order that we may fully understand this answer, we should not lose sight of the fact that Our Lord, in instituting each Sacrament, had some particular necessity of the soul in view. The answer to the preceding question has already intimated that the Sacraments being seven in number, give each some distinctive special grace, besides sanctifying grace. This is also conformable to reason, for seven necessities of the soul require seven different remedies.

The strongest and most convincing reason for the necessity of sacramental grace is found in the very nature of the Sacraments: they point to a new mode of worshipping God, or signify a special grace, and the connection between what they signify and what they bestow is like that which exists between a cause and its effect.

It is commonly taught that besides habitual grace, which all the Sacraments confer, Baptism gives to the Christian a special help to shun worldly pomps and profane pleasures, which he renounces before receiving the Sacrament; Confirmation gives aid to profess the Faith, when occasion arises and duty compels us to make open profession of our belief; the Holy Eucharist confers grace to continue and progress in the love of God; Penance gives grace to detest past sins, satisfy for them and to avoid their proximate occasions; Extreme Unction bestows the help to purge oneself of all the remains of sin and gives strength to resist the temptations of the evil one; Holy Orders give special graces to the ministers of the Church to discharge their sacred functions worthily; and Matrimony gives aid to the married couple to remain faithful to each other, and to educate their children in the love of God and in the practice of their holy Religion.

As a natural consequence, a sacramental grace must be bestowed at the moment the sacrament is conferred, and, therefore, could not simply and solely be a right to future help. The effect of sacramental grace must be similar to that of sanctifying grace as to its immediate efficacy at the moment the Sacrament is received; but that immediate effect may not be all that

the Sacrament gives, for it may also move our good Lord to give all actual graces that are necessary to attain the end of each sacrament.

One example, fully explained, will suffice to make this clear. Let us take the Sacrament of Confirmation: in this Sacrament the bishop extends his hands over those to be confirmed, and prays that they may receive the Holy Ghost. He anoints the forehead of each with chrism while imposing hands on him, saying: "I sign thee with the sign of the Cross and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation." These acts and words constitute the outward sign of the Sacrament. By this anointing and the accompanying words is meant that the Christian, who is confirmed, must openly confess and practice his faith and never be ashamed of it. The sacramental grace in this case consists in the help it gives to profess and practice the Faith openly. Is the confirmed Christian now bound openly to profess his faith and to practice it every moment of his life or even every hour of the day? Evidently not; and hence that aid and help will be given, when circumstances and duty require that the Christian should practice and profess his faith; as when, for instance, someone is bound to hear Mass or receive the Sacrament of Penance, or of the Holy Eucharist, or when he is interrogated by legitimate authority about his faith, etc.

St. Thomas (P. III, q. 62, a. 2) asks the question whether the Sacraments give something more besides sanctifying grace, virtues and gifts, and he answers in the affirmative. He teaches that sacramental grace enters into and perfects the very essence of the soul, for by that grace the soul participates in some manner in the divine life. (l. c) (Cf. I. 2, q. 110, a. 3, 4). Since its natural strength and power flow from the essence of the soul, so likewise some new perfections relating to the supernatural strength of the soul flow from sacramental grace, and these perfect the powers of the soul for all the new obligations to be performed. Although, as the holy Doctor explains, virtue and gifts are sufficient to perfect the soul and its powers for its acts in general, nevertheless, since the Sacraments were instituted for some special effects that are required in the life of a Christian, a sacramental grace becomes necessary.

In explaining the question, wherein sacramental grace consists, we shall endeavor to reconcile two seemingly opposite opinions. First of all, we say that sanctifying grace is the life of the soul and with it virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost are infused into the soul, and that all the Sacraments give spe-

cial sacramental graces. These may be considered again as virtues and gifts, i. e., as several distinct perfections of the soul that lives the life of grace. A sacramental grace so considered belongs to the same species of grace as virtues and gifts, and differs from these only because its perfection tends to a special end proper to each Sacrament. We conclude from what has been said, that sacramental grace is a distinct manner of being or perfection of habitual or sanctifying grace, adding an inherent power to that grace which disposes the soul itself to tend towards the end for which each Sacrament was instituted. This does not exclude actual grace, provided we accord to sacramental grace the necessary power to add to sanctifying grace, besides the virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost, an inherent aptitude and tendency to actual grace.

Three things seem to belong to sacramental grace: 1) it adds a new perfection or mode of being to the supernatural life of the soul; 2) this perfection is bestowed immediately at the moment a Sacrament is conferred; and 3) this perfection or quality of the supernatural life tends towards the end for which each Sacrament was instituted.

147. Do the Sacraments always give grace?

The Sacraments always give grace if we receive them with the right disposition.

Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders can be received validly but once, and, therefore, cannot give grace more than once. Matrimony cannot be contracted a second time until one of the contracting parties has died, and Extreme Unction cannot be given again during the same sickness; because the sacramental grace in these last two Sacraments, Matrimony and Extreme Unction, continues to operate as long as the same condition exists. Therefore these Sacraments, if repeated, could not give grace until a new condition arises, either by a new valid marriage or by a new sickness.

That the Sacraments always give grace necessarily follows from what has been said on the question, "What is a Sacrament?" (136 et sq.) But a few details are here added to make the effects of the Sacraments still clearer.

1st. All the Sacraments confer sanctifying or habitual grace: there can be no difference of opinion on that point, for the Council of Trent declared that "all true justice (justification) begins, or if begun is increased, or if lost is restored" by the Sacraments, and that cannot be done, except by an infusion of grace into the soul. Mortal sin is an obstacle to the infusion of grace through the Sacraments of the Living, but venial sins do not impede their effect; and, therefore, no Sacrament was principally directed towards the remission of venial sin. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 79, a. 8).

2nd. Although the Sacraments give habitual grace, Baptism and Penance were instituted to blot out sin that is incompatible with sanctifying grace, and, therefore, original and mortal sins are necessarily remitted by Baptism and mortal sin by Penance, when the "first grace" is bestowed. If he that approaches these Sacraments of the Dead be already in the state of grace, he receives the "second grace" or an increase of sanctifying grace. The reason is, as we said, that the Sacraments always give grace, if we receive them with the right disposition, and since one can approach the Sacrament of Penance often, even though one is free from mortal sin, he will receive each time an increase of grace. Hence the practice of pious people who go to confession once a week is highly to be commended.

3rd. The Sacraments of the Living give the "second grace" or an increase of sanctifying grace, and as often as they are worthily received, so often an increase of grace is conferred upon the soul. But what will happen if one approaches these Sacraments in the state of mortal sin, and is not conscious of his guilt? The Angelic Doctor, when treating separately of each Sacrament of the Living, teaches that if a person so approaches any one of these Sacraments and elicits an act of imperfect contrition, called also attrition, the Sacrament would communicate to the soul the first grace. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 72, a. 7 to 2).

It is argued that he who receives the Sacraments of the Living with the disposition required for Baptism and Penance, that is, with an imperfect contrition, has a sufficient disposition, as far as he is aware, and he cannot be said to place a wilful obstacle to the effect of the Sacrament. But attrition at least is required, because without it even the Sacraments of the Dead could not forgive sin; for, according to the admitted doctrine, no sin can be forgiven without repentance.

From this we see how advisable it is that people who are to receive any Sacrament of the Living should, before its reception, make an act of perfect contrition, or at least an act of imperfect contrition, even if they are not conscious of having committed a mortal sin since their last confession.

4th. The Sacraments confer grace "ex opere operato" and not "ex opere operantis," that is, the Sacraments owe their efficacy not to the minister who confers them, but to the work or rite, as established by Christ; and, therefore, their effects do not depend on the holiness of the minister conferring the Sacrament. Nevertheless the minister himself is guilty of a sacrilege, if, in the state of mortal sin he administers any Sacrament without grave necessity. Therefore, a lay person, even if conscious of having committed a mortal sin since his last confession, may baptize a child in danger of death, if it is not prudent to delay; but even in this case, he should try to excite in his heart a perfect contrition for his sins, with the intention of having recourse to the Sacrament of Penance as soon as practicable.

As for the validity of a Sacrament, not even faith is required in the minister. Hence, Baptism may be validly given by anyone who has the use of reason and has the intention to do what Christ has instituted or what the Church practices.

5th. Although the recipient of a Sacrament always receives grace, unless he places an obstacle in the way, there are additional graces conferred on the well-disposed, and that in proportion to their careful preparation and pious dispositions. The better the disposition, the more abundant the graces. The decree of the Council of Trent already cited after saying that "all justification begins, or if begun, is increased or if lost, is recovered" through the Sacraments, adds: "Everyone according to his measure which the Holy Ghost imparts as He wills, and according to each one's disposition and co-operation."

This good and devout disposition, this co-operation thus increases the grace of the Sacrament in our souls, but it is not indispensable to the validity of the Sacrament. The conditions required to receive the graces of the Sacraments, if the recipient has the use of reason, are as follows: 1, to be in the state of grace, when receiving the Sacraments of the Living; 2, for the reception of the Sacrament of Baptism it is required that the recipient grieve for the sins of his past life and that he desire the new life given in Baptism. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 68, a. 7, c); 3, for Penance it is necessary that those who approach it, repent for a supernatural reason of all their mortal sins. If they have no mortal sin to confess, they must confess some venial sin, or a mortal sin already confessed in a previous confession; and they should have a true sorrow for at least one venial sin they do confess with a firm purpose to avoid it or to diminish the number of their venial sins; 4, besides these necessary dispositions, all those having the use of reason should have the will or intention to receive the Sacraments. This needs a further explanation.

a) No one having the use of reason can receive a Sacrament against his will. St. Thomas (Suppl. q. 45, a. 4), speaking of Baptism, says: "If anyone received an outward ablution, but did not intend to receive the Sacrament, and did it playfully and deceitfully, he would not be baptized"; and this is true of all the Sacraments, except the Holy Eucharist, which in reality is already a Sacrament before it is given in Holy Communion. But even in this last case no fruit would be gained from the reception.

No Sacrament can be received validly without previous Baptism, for the Council of Florence decrees as follows: "Holy Baptism holds the first place among all the Sacraments; it is the door to spiritual life; for by it we become members of Christ and of the body of the Church."

b) Again, no one with the use of reason can receive the fruits of the Sacraments who is indifferent as to whether he receives the Sacraments or not. The Angelic Doctor (P. III, q. 68, a. 7) devotes a whole article to teaching us that the will or intention to receive the Sacraments is required, and that therefore, the Church in her ritual asks the person to be baptized: "Wilt thou be baptized?"

c) In order to receive the graces attached to a Sacrament, at least a general intention to obtain the fruits of what the Church does or of what Christ has instituted is required, but it is not indispensable that the recipient should fully understand what particular grace the Sacrament confers. Even an intention resting on a confused notion of some spiritual benefit or gift to be derived from the Sacrament would be sufficient. Moreover, only a habitual intention is required, for an intention once made and not retracted, is sufficient. We must nevertheless except Matrimony, because for this Sacrament a virtual intention is necessary, that is, the intention to receive the Sacrament must actually exist at least in the preparations or acts that lead to the consent, e. g., the mutual promise to marry and the preparations for the ceremony that follow such promise would be a virtual intention, notwithstanding that one of the parties is absent-minded at the time he gives his consent. The reason for this distinction is that the Sacrament of Matrimony depends on the contract, or rather is the contract itself, i. e., the obligations the married parties impose upon themselves; and since the contracting parties are the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony, and a habitual intention in the minister of a Sacrament is not considered sufficient, we have another reason why the intention here must be virtual.

As for the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, if the sick man is deprived of his senses, an interpretative intention is sufficient, i. e., a constructed intention gathered from the fact that a Cath-

olic would receive the Sacrament, if opportunity were offered him.

d) To receive the fruits of the Sacraments such dispositions are required as the nature of each Sacrament or the precepts of the Church demand: thus, to receive the Holy Eucharist a fast from the previous midnight is a necessary disposition for those who are not especially exempted from it. Finally, one who is excommunicated or under interdict is not allowed to receive any Sacrament.

148. Can we receive the Sacraments more than once?

We can receive the Sacraments more than once, except Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders.

We can receive the Sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist often, even daily, and Penance more than once a day, if there be good reason for it.

As to the Holy Eucharist, our Holy Father Pius X, of holy memory, has expressed in his decree on daily communion a fatherly and earnest request, that all the faithful should receive Holy Communion daily, not even excepting children who have arrived at the use of reason and who can distinguish between common food and the Bread from Heaven, offered as food for our souls in Holy Communion. What happy and holy results have ensued wherever this practice has been introduced, especially in schools and colleges, where such practice can with little trouble be made general.

There is only one case in which lay people can receive Holy Communion twice on the same day, viz., when a person having received Holy Communion in the morning is afterwards taken dangerously sick and receives it again as "Viaticum" later in the day.

Priests being obliged to communicate as often as they say Mass are not limited to one daily communion, but must partake of Holy Communion as often as they use the privilege of saying Mass, as on Christmas and All Souls day, when every priest is allowed to celebrate Mass three times. On Sundays and other days of obligation, many parish priests and their assistants, with the per-

mission of their bishop, who is the sole judge of the necessity thereof, may celebrate the Holy Sacrifice twice so that all the people may have an opportunity to comply with the obligation of hearing Mass.

As for the Sacraments of Matrimony and Extreme Unction, they may be received as often as they can be received validly: Matrimony, when neither party to the contract of marriage is still bound by a previous marriage; and Extreme Unction, only once in the same danger of death from one or more ailments. But when a sick person is prudently judged to be out of danger, and afterwards relapses or contracts a new sickness, and is again in danger of death, he may again receive the last Sacraments.

149. Why can we not receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once?

We cannot receive Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders more than once, because they imprint a character on the soul. In this answer we learn that besides sanctifying and sacramental graces, which are bestowed on the soul by every Sacrament, some Sacraments imprint a character on the soul, and therefore they cannot be received more than once. In the next answer we are taught wherein that character consists.

From the fact that this character, which Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders imprint on the soul, remains in the soul and cannot be effaced or destroyed, it seems evident that as long as this characteristic mark remains, the Sacrament cannot be repeated. The effect being permanent, there seems to be no sufficient reason to warrant its repetition: it would only cause confusion. When a ranchman brands his cattle, or a shepherd marks his sheep, when a ship-owner paints the name of the ship on its prow, no new name, no new mark or brand of the same kind is used until the old is obliterated or destroyed; but the character of a Sacrament cannot be effaced, and, therefore, it cannot be received more than once. Again, sheep may change owners, as well as cattle and ships or anything else, and then the new owner's mark may be used after effacing the old one. But there is no change of ownership in the Sacraments that imprint a character; and as Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders enable one to do something that he could not do

before, and as that power cannot be taken away, or surrendered, it would be useless to give it again. This will appear still clearer when the nature of the sacramental character has been fully explained.

That some Sacraments imprint a character in the soul was defined by the Council of Florence in its decree for the Armenians, and also by the Council of Trent (Sess. 7, C. 9) against the Wicklyffites, Lutherans and Calvinists, who deny that any character is imprinted in the soul in any of the Sacraments, and pretend that Pope Innocent III was the first to introduce the novelty.

When Protestants pretend that Pope Innocent III, who ascended the Pontifical throne in 1198 was the first to teach that certain Sacraments imprint a character in the soul, they evidently try to impose upon their hearers. When St. Paul teaches us that "he that confirmeth us with you in Christ and that hath anointed us, is God: Who also hath sealed us and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. i. 21, 22), by the word "sealed," he certainly meant that seal or character which the Sacrament of Holy Orders imprints in the soul of the recipient; and St. Augustine, referring to Baptism, has the following: "Shall the Christian Sacraments accomplish less than the bodily marks impressed on the soldier? That mark is not stamped on his body anew, as often as he resumes the military service which he has relinquished; but the old one is recognized and approved."

The Church has always taught that Baptism once validly conferred cannot be repeated, and why? No other good reason can be given than that it imprints a character in the soul, as St. Augustine so beautifully explains. When St. Stephen held the chair of Peter from 253 to 257, a celebrated dispute arose about the validity of Baptism conferred by heretics. The bishops of Africa, with St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, at their head, gave several reasons why the Baptism of heretics was to be considered null and void. St. Stephen held fast to the tradition of the Church, and in the subsequent Council of Nice it prevailed and has never since been disputed in the Church If the Church decreed that Baptism should not be repeated, no explanation can be given for it, except the one assigned by St. Augustine, viz., that the mark remains and is indelible.

150. What is the character which these Sacraments imprint in the soul?

The character which these Sacraments imprint on the soul is a spiritual mark which remains forever.

St. Thomas (P. III, q. 63, a. 1, 2, 5) clearly ex-

plains that there are two effects directly ascribable to the sacramental character: it fits the recipient for a special consecration to God, and it is also a mark which serves to distinguish those that have it from those that have it not. By Baptism the recipient becomes a child of God and a member of the Church. It opens to him the door to all the other Sacraments, and without it he cannot receive them. With it he receives a supernatural life of the soul, and he can merit or lay up treasures for heaven. By Confirmation he becomes a true soldier of Christ, and is empowered to fight under the standard of the Cross, like a true soldier under his Captain, Christ the Saviour, Who leads him to battle against the enemies of his salvation, the world, the flesh, and the devil. By Holy Orders he ceases to battle in the ranks of the simple soldier, and becomes an officer and leader in the army of his Chief.

In each of these three Sacraments, the recipient is attached to three different services, which St. Thomas rightly calls the three manners of worshipping God: as an adopted child, as a soldier and as a special minister of God; and each Sacrament also imprints on the soul the spiritual mark corresponding to the service. Furthermore, St. Thomas calls the mark an indelible one, i. e., the character or the mark cannot be obliterated. The child of God may pass to a higher service or worship: all may receive a second mark; and the male soldiers may even receive the third mark or character, without the loss of the first two.

If we now ask in what this spiritual mark consists, we shall be obliged to confess our inability to explain it fully, and the reason is clear: we have no concept of what a spirit is; we know it is not matter; we are conscious that our spirit, our soul, has intellect and will, that it can think, reason and form judgments; it can desire, decide and will without the body; we know besides that the soul has inclinations, feelings of joy, of fear, of hatred, of love, etc.; but further than this we do not know the nature of a spirit, much less can we understand how a spirit can me marked indelibly. St. Thomas (P. III, q. 63, a. 2, 5) calls it a certain modification of the soul, a certain

quality that confers on it powers it did not possess; but as long as we are sojourners on this earth, we take all our first notions from our senses, and as there is nothing in the material world around us that brings us a notion of a spirit, we must patiently wait for the time when we shall be delivered from our material body and when our soul will be so transformed that we see God face to face, and communicate with the other spirits, with angels and saints, without the aid of bodily organs.

All that has been taught us about the character of the Sacraments may be reduced to the following heads:

1st. From the Greek word "charasso" (I imprint) we learn that it is a distinct spiritual mark in the soul, a distinctive impression or sign, which, being spiritual, does not touch the body, and that this mark or seal distinguishes the recipient from others that have it not.

2nd. It is an indelible sign, and although imprinted on the soul together with the "first" or "second grace," virtues and gifts, it is independent of them, and, therefore, if grace be lost by a subsequent mortal sin, the character is not lost. Even the damned carry it along with them into hell to their great confusion and shame.

3rd. It makes the soul capable of certain acts regarding divine worship and the service of God; for Baptism enables the recipient to receive all the other Sacraments and to wax strong in grace; Confirmation enables and strengthens the confirmed to practice their faith and to perform in a perfect manner their duties as soldiers of Christ; and Holy Orders endow the ordained with a special aid and power to perform their clerical ministry.

151. Does this character remain in the soul after death?

This character remains in the soul even after death for the honor and glory of those that are saved and for the shame and punishment of those that are lost.

We have seen that the Church teaches that the character of the Sacraments is indelible; yet as this mark is to fit us for a special worship of God and to distinguish us from one another here upon earth, it might seem that after death the distinguishing sign should not remain. But we shall soon be convinced of the contrary, if we reflect that the future life is the retribution of the present life, and that there is in the reward of the elect and the punishment of the wicked a

sufficient reason for the indelibility of the character. When armies have successfully battled against the enemies of their nation and peace is restored, what fruits do the hardships which war entails bring to the conquering army? Peace with honor: soldiers are honored according to their rank; the greatest glory comes, of course, to the generals and to inferior officers according to their rank. But if some of the warriors, be they cowards or traitors, have gone over to the enemy, they bear their shame; and the higher their position, the greater their degradation and dishonor. So it will be with us after this life, when the strife and battles of spiritual warfare are over.

Those who on account of their youth have not yet entered into battle, and, therefore, were spared the danger of their salvation, will be rewarded, for they were signed in Baptism as children of their heavenly Father and they will be honored as children and co-heirs with Christ in the kingdom of God. They, who, having grown up, were incorporated into Christ's army and have obtained the victory, shall retain another sign and mark by which they were distinguished in Confirmation from non-combatants and be decorated forever with that glorious mark, as a memory of their valiant fight. Those in Holy Orders who distinguish themselves as true ambassadors and ministers, will retain the glorious mark of faithful stewards. They who have never been signed in Baptism and, therefore, never were accounted children of God, cannot receive the inheritance which belongs only to the children. But far worse will be the condition of those who after their adoption as children of God, and still bearing in their souls the mark received in Baptism, rose and revolted against the best of Fathers, disowned Him, and refused Him respect and obedience. Should the ungrateful child not bear forever the weight of its ingratitude and should the sign of a child of God not serve for its shame and degradation? Worse still shall be the condition of those, who through Confirmation have become the soldiers of Christ, and wearing the insignia of their rank, have forsaken their colors and have fought under the standard of Satan. If death overtakes them in the ranks of the enemy, is it not equitable and just that they should be punished for their cowardice and be branded for all eternity as traitors and cowards, like the Roman soldiers who under action in the face of the enemy laid down their arms and were branded with hot irons? But what shall we say of him who having been anointed and stamped with the character of a minister of the God of sovereign maj-

esty, finally loses his soul? Alas! Of all opprobrium and shame none can be imagined greater or more overwhelming. He has been marked as a child of God, and if his conduct has been like that of the children of Belial, his confusion at the sight of his Baptismal sign shall exceed that of others as his unworthy conduct is less excusable. The coward's brand will appear the more shameful in him, because of his education, training and calling, which gave him superior strength in the struggle for salvation. But the character of a minister of God, imparted to him with the ordination which he defiled, will fill him forever with an overwhelming confusion and inspire the devils and damned souls with an inconceivable horror and hatred for him because of his sacerdotal mark. Enough: he is a Judas and not only a coward with a coward's brand, but with a traitor's and archrebel's brand burnt deep into his soul.

LESSON THE FOURTEENTH

ON BAPTISM

152. What is Baptism?

Baptism is a Sacrament that cleanses us from original sin, makes us children of God and heirs to Heaven.

The word "baptism" is derived from the Greek "baptizo," i. e., "I plunge," "I immerse." Hence baptism means immersion, ablution. From the etymology we cannot deduce any particular argument in favor of any opinion regarding the nature of the Sacrament, except that the word is an authorized translation of the Syro-Chaldaic word used by Our Lord when He said in the language then in use: "Going therefore teach all nations baptizing them, etc." (Mat. xxviii. 19).

Only the doctrine and practice of the Apostles and of their successors, whom Christ constituted the teaching order of the true Church, can enlighten us on the nature of Baptism.

The Roman Catechism calls Baptism "the Sacrament of Regeneration by the water and the word," which will be better understood when we say that it is a Sacrament by which through the external ablution of the body and the invocation of the Blessed Trinity man's spiritual regeneration is effected.

Our catechism, in the answer to the question "What is Baptism?", intends rather to give us the effects of the Sacrament than a definition of it, when it says: 1st, that it cleanses us from original sin; 2nd, that it makes us children of God; and 3rd,

that as such children we obtain a right to the inheritance of Heaven.

Baptism was instituted by Christ; but when? That it was instituted by Our Lord before His Passion seems certain, for on the night before His death He instituted the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and Holy Orders, and since Baptism is the door, as it were, to all the other Sacraments, as no Sacrament can be conferred except on baptized persons, there seems to be no ground for dispensing the Apostles from the rule that applies to all members of the Church. We conclude from this that Christ Himself probably baptized all His Apostles. From St. John (John iii. 22) we know that Christ baptized with a Baptism different from that of John the Baptist. When St. Paul was converted, he was first ordered to go to the priest Ananias in Damascus and to receive Baptism at his hands. St. Thomas advances the opinion that Christ instituted Baptism when He was baptized by John in the Jordan, because the water received the power of spiritual cleansing when the heavens were opened, which is an effect of the Sacrament; and because the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Whose invocation forms an integral part of the Sacrament, was present: the Father by the voice, the Son as the Recipient, and the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove hovering over the Saviour. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 66, a. 2). This opinion is commonly accepted by theologians.

Effects of Baptism. The answer of the catechism gives the three principal effects of Baptism; other effects, being but the consequences of the three, can be deduced from them; and yet others from the fact that Baptism imprints a character in the soul. The effects of the Sacrament are to cleanse the recipient from original sin, to make him a child of God, and to give him a right to the inheritance of heaven. It confers sanctifying grace or supernatural life on the soul; it gives a special sacramental grace; it imprints an indelible character in the soul; it opens the door to the other Sacraments, for no other Sacrament can be validly received without previous Baptism; it remits all sin, original, mortal and venial, and all punishment due to sin; finally the recipient of the Sacrament becomes a member of the Church and a member of the mystical body of Christ. The effects of Baptism are more fully explained in the answer to the next question.

153. Are actual sins ever remitted by Baptism?

Actual sins and all the punishment due to them are remitted by Baptism, if the person baptized be guilty of any.

For the sake of clearness, it will be useful to explain all the effects of Baptism; they are seven:

1st. It confers sanctifying grace unless the recipient place an obstacle to the Sacrament, as would be the case if one, who has attained the use of reason, receives Baptism without sorrow for his mortal sins. This effect follows from the fact that it is a Sacrament of the Dead, as we have explained in the preceding lesson, and gives the "first grace." By this Sacrament the soul enters upon its supernatural life, which it did not possess before, and with it are infused into the soul the three theological virtues and also the moral virtues, according to the teachings of the Roman Catechism, as well as the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

2nd. It cleanses us from original sin, that is, it absolutely blots out the taint of original sin and all punishment due to it. The principal punishment of original sin was the loss of sanctifying grace and eternal separation from God.

3rd. It also forgives all actual sins whether mortal or venial, if the baptized has at least an imperfect contrition for his sins, for mortal sin and sanctifying grace cannot exist side by side in the soul, and furthermore it remits all punishment due to sin, so that a penance is never enjoined on the recipient of Baptism. "Nothing," says the Council of Trent, "impedes the entrance into heaven of one who has been baptized." (Trid. Sess. 5, on Original Sin). Nevertheless it does not take away the inclination to evil and the sufferings of this life, which were caused by the sin of Adam and Eve, and which we inherit at our birth; but these cannot be considered as a punishment after original sin is forgiven, for they are the natural effects of our corrupted nature, and God permits them for our advancement in spiritual life. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 69, a. 3).

4th. Baptism confers also a sacramental grace, that is, a certain strength and vigor in sanctifying grace itself, with the right to actual graces in order that the baptized person may by that very disposition or quality of the soul accept the Christian doctrine with docility, lead the life of a child of God and be able to receive all the other Sacraments. The three theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity are also infused into our soul by Baptism as well as the moral virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost. (No. 146).

5th. Baptism also imprints an indelible character in the soul and, therefore, the Sacrament cannot be repeated. If there be a prudent doubt about the validity of the Sacrament, it can be administered again under condition, and then the one that baptizes says: "If thou art not baptized, I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The reason thereof lies in the conviction that to expose the Sacrament to nullity is an irreverence to one of God's greatest gifts and therefore, an irreverence toward God Himself; and to avoid this, a condition is prefixed. Likewise if there is doubt whether

a newly born child is alive or not, the person baptizing says: "If thou art alive, etc.," or in a more general way that covers all cases: "If thou art capable of receiving Baptism, I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

6th. Baptism makes the recipient a member of the mystical body of Jesus Christ and a member of His Church, of which He is the Head, and from that moment all those validly baptized are subject to the laws of the Church and remain under its jurisdiction. (See Authority of the Church, No. 123).

7th. Through Baptism the baptized person becomes spiritually related with his baptizer and his sponsors. (See on this subject the impediments of marriage, No. 287).

154. Is Baptism necessary to salvation?

Baptism is necessary to salvation, because without it we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

We learn the necessity of Baptism for salvation from the words of our Saviour: "Unless a man be born again of the water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5); and also from St. Matthew (Mat. xxviii. 19), for since Christ commanded His Apostles to teach and baptize all nations, we conclude that Baptism must be received by all people. Still more explicit is the Council of Trent, when it teaches us (Sess. 6, ch. 4) that the Sacrament of Baptism is necessary for all men unto salvation, i. e., either Baptism of water in reality, or that of desire. For adults there is besides that a divine precept and the precept of the Church to receive it as soon as practicable; and the unbaptized owe it to themselves, that is, by the natural precept of charity towards themselves, not to defer it without serious reasons.

Tradition on the necessity of Baptism unto salvation is indeed clear and convincing, as based on the words of our Lord to Nicodemus.

St. Ireneus (d. 202) speaking of the laver of water and the grace of the Spirit, (sanctifying grace) says: "Both are necessary, as both profit unto the life of God." (L. II, Adv. Haer., XIX). Indeed, the grace of the Holy Ghost is necessary to salvation, and so is Baptism, because it bestows that grace.

Tertullian, (d. 216) teaches that, although faith alone

was necessary before the Nativity, Passion and Resurrection of Our Lord, it cannot be sufficient after the law of Baptism has been imposed and a form prescribed for it. "Go," he says, "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." To this law refers the decree of our Lord: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven"; and it imposes belief in the necessity of Baptism. Thus from that time, all the faithful were baptized. 'L. de Bapt. XLLL). In another place Tertullian teaches that it is not only proper for laymen to baptize those in danger of death, but holds them guilty if they neglect that duty. (Ibid.).

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386) has the following: "If any one is not baptized, he cannot obtain salvation, except martyrs only, who without the water can reach the celestial kingdom." (Catech. III).

St. Ambrose, (d. 397) after saying that circumcision was the figure of Baptism, exhorts all to have recourse to the latter, "Because no one ascends into the Kingdom of Heaven, except by the Sacrament of Baptism"; and a little further on he quotes the passage: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost... etc." and adds that Our Lord excepts no man, or infant, or anyone prevented through any necessity: that is, not even those who cannot receive Baptism will ever reach Heaven without it. (L. De iis qui initiantur, XI).

As to the time when Baptism became necessary for salvation, we should before determining it, bear in mind that the necessity of Baptism originates in a positive law, and that all laws must be sufficiently promulgated before they are binding. The farther people lived from Palestine, the longer it would take for a sufficient promulgation of the law; and if there still be people in places remote from civilization, where the light of the Gospel has never penetrated, its promulgation can hardly be said to have been made. Such people are considered by many theologians to be in the same condition as those who lived before the coming of our Lord.

When we speak of Baptism as necessary to salvation for all people, we must include children as well as adults; for the law is general. This doctrine we hold against the Pelagians, Wicklyffites, Socinians, Calvinists, Baptists and others. This has always been taught in the Church, and Baptism was at all times given to children. St. Thomas (P. III, q. 68, a. 1) gives the reason for it: "For," he says, "no one can be saved unless he be incorporated with Christ, and unless he become a member of Him (that is, unless he become a member of the mystical body of Christ), and this is done by Baptism." St. Augustine (d. 430) sums up the doctrine of the Church on infant Baptism, when he says: "If you wish to be a Catholic, do not believe, or say,

or teach that infants, who have been prevented by death from being baptized, can obtain the remission of original sin." (L. III, de Anima, IX). "Whoever says," I quote St. Augustine again, "that in Christ even the infants are quickened who depart this life without participating in the Sacrament, undoubtedly goes against the preaching of the Apostles, and he condemns the whole Church; and therefore, wherever people hurry and run with their little ones to be baptized, it is because of the certain belief that they cannot otherwise be quickened in Christ." (Ep. ad Hier.).

The testimony of St. Ambrose on the necessity of Baptism for all, including infants, has already been given above. We add the authority of the councils of the Church. It is a notorious fact that in the fifth century the Pelagians were condemned in various councils, because they denied the necessity of Baptism for infants unto remission of sin and unto salvation. The Council of Carthage, held in 416, says of the Pelagians: "They also deny that infants are to be baptized, because of salvation given through Christ, and thus by that fatal doctrine, they bring eternal death upon themselves." (Synod. Ep. to Innocent I).

155. Who can administer Baptism?

The priest is the ordinary minister of Baptism, but in case of necessity anyone who has the use of reason may baptize.

This question regards only the lawfulness of the act of baptizing, and not its validity, and, therefore, in this answer, the Catechism uses intentionally the word "may" and not "can."

Anyone who has the use of reason can baptize validly, provided he use the proper outward sign, i. e., the proper matter and form, as explained in the next question, and provided he have the intention required, but such Baptism would not always be lawful; for lay people may only baptize when the grown person or child to be baptized is in danger of death. Even then lay people should not baptize solemnly with the usual ceremonies, but confine themselves to the simple Baptism, nor are they allowed to use baptismal water, which is blessed on the eve of Pentecost and Easter, with the addition of consecrated oils and chrism.

The priest is the ordinary minister, although a deacon may also baptize solemnly with baptismal water, if delegated thereto by lawful authority, i. e., the bishop or th epastor of the place.

The Roman Ritual specifies that in case of necessity a certain order should be kept in the choice of a minister: if a priest be present, he should have precedence over a deacon, a deacon over a subdeacon, a cleric over a lay person, a man over a woman, except for the sake of modesty, and except also if the woman have a better knowledge of the form and of the manner of baptizing.

Every Catholic should bear in mind that whoever fails to baptize a child in danger of death, unless someone else takes the obligation upon himself, commits a mortal sin, because such neglect may cause the loss of a soul. The father and mother of a newly born child also sin grievously, if without serious reason they defer their child's baptism more than ten or twelve days, and the contrary custom among a certain class of people cannot be given as a valid excuse from the rule laid down here. As for adults who are sufficiently instructed, they should also receive the Sacrament as soon as practicable, and if a reason exists to defer it, they should leave its weight to the decision of the parish priest of their locality.

156. How is Baptism given?

Whoever baptizes should pour water upon the head of the person to be baptized and say, while pouring the water: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Since Baptism is a Sacrament of the New Law, it has matter and form. The matter is ablution with natural water, viz., water from a river, lake, well, or from springs, sea-water, rain-water, water from melted snow or ice. As natural water is always at hand, it is useless to inquire about the validity of the Sacrament conferred with light beer, coffee or tea, for their use, as remote matter of Baptism, is forbidden under pain of mortal sin, except in extreme necessity. Hence cologne or rose-water, or other water distilled from the leaves of flowers, would make the Baptism invalid.

When Baptism is conferred solemnly by a deacon or priest, baptismal water is to be used, and that water is

blessed on the eve of Easter and Pentecost with the addition of chrism and holy oils, previously consecrated on Holy Thursday by the bishop.

The words or the form of the Sacrament can be none other than the words of Christ: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Therefore, it is obvious that when Holy Scripture tells us that the Apostles baptized in the name of Christ, we must understand by it the Baptism which Christ had instituted and commanded. If, as some think, the Apostles did baptize in the name of Christ instead of in the name of the Three Divine Persons, they must have had a special revelation from God to do so; but this is not probable.

To the outward sign, besides natural water as a remote matter, also belongs the mode of ablution, and this can be done validly by immersion, by pouring or aspersion. (Trent S. 7, C. 3, on Baptism).

St. Thomas (P. III, q. 66, a. 7 to 2) teaches us that although immersion represents more vividly in a figure the burial of Christ, nevertheless infusion and aspersion on a part of the body expresses the same figure. In Article 8 of the same Question, he teaches that one infusion is sufficient for the validity of the Sacrament, but that, except in extreme necessity, Baptism by a deacon or priest must be given with a triple infusion on the principal part of the body, i. e., on the head, or if this be not possible, on the chest, neck or shoulders near the head. Baptism given on any other part of the body would be of doubtful validity.

Lay people, who, in case of imminent danger of death of a child or grown person, may licitly and validly baptize, should bear in mind that the water must touch the body, and, therefore, they should part the hair, if it is very abundant, or pour the water on the forehead. Special care should be taken to procure the valid baptism of a child delivered by the Caesarian operation from the body of its living or dead mother. The relatives of mothers who die in pregnancy should have a great concern about the spiritual life of the unborn offspring.

That Baptism by immersion is a valid ablution need not be discussed, because all schismatics as well as all heretics agree with Catholics on this point, and up to the 14th century, it was generally in use in the Latin Church. As for the Baptism by infusion or sprinkling, we have the authority of the Church is

employing them in the case of the dying; and we also learn it from the book called the Doctrine of the Apostles, which dates from the end of the first or the beginning of the second century. Again, St. Cyprian in the third century, having been consulted about the Baptism of the clinics, i. e., the sick who had deferred their Baptism, answered that those who had not been immersed, but were baptized by infusion, were validly baptized.

157. How many kinds of Baptism are there?

There are three kinds of Baptism: Baptism of water Baptism of desire and Baptism of blood.

It need hardly be explained that the Baptism of water is the only Baptism which Our Lord has instituted, and that this Baptism is necessary unto salvation for all men, if it can be received. But as there are cases when Baptism cannot be administered, can anything else take its place, or can the benefits and effects of Baptism be secured by any other means? The catechism gives us the answer by teaching us that there are three kinds of Baptism: Baptism of water, Baptism of desire and Baptism of blood; but it must not be understood that Baptism of desire and Baptism of blood are real Sacraments, i. e., that they were instituted by Christ as such, that they contain and cause grace by their own power and virtue, and that they infallibly confer grace, provided no obstacle be placed to their efficacy.

Again there is no other Sacrament that can take the place of the Sacrament of Baptism, for all other Sacraments of their very nature suppose that Baptism has been conferred, and no Sacrament can be validly conferred on the person who lacks the character imprinted in Baptism. The reason is found in the doctrine that with Baptism the beginning of supernatural life in the soul springs into existence: spiritual birth necessarily precedes the supernatural growth of the soul and its power of performing the duties of a Christian, whether considered in himself or as a living member of the society instituted by Christ, His Church.

As to the different kinds of Baptism, namely, by pouring, by immersion or by sprinkling, they are but three different modes of ablution, and ablution is an integral part of the Sacrament, and with regard to its

validity, it matters not whether the ablution is done by immersion, pouring or aspersion.

The Church has a right to determine which mode is the most proper in ordinary circumstances: for those of the Latin rite the Church prescribes Baptism by pouring; for the Greek Catholics she prescribes immersion for children, but they may use either manner for grown people according to circumstances; and should it happen that time is pressing, as for instance in a shipwreck, and there is danger that some may perish without Baptism, then all persons, no matter to what rite they belong, should be baptized by aspersion.

158. What is the Baptism of water?

Baptism of water is that which is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, and saying at the same time: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Baptism of water is the only Baptism instituted by Jesus Christ. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

The catechism again shows us here the ordinary manner of Baptism as now generally in use in the Catholic Church; nor may any one, be he bishop, priest, deacon or layman, provided he follow the Latin rite, use any other manner, except in a few extraordinary cases, when Baptism by sprinkling, called also Baptism of aspersion, may be resorted to. The Greek Uniates, and Catholic Armenians are required by the Church to use their own mode of baptizing, as has been handed down by the tradition of the early Church; and this rule applies to all other eastern rites: Syrians, Copts, Ruthenians, etc. Almost all of these use immersion. As for children at least, the manner of nearly all oriental rites partakes of both immersion and pouring: lukewarm water is put into a laver or font, and the child is placed in the bath while the minister is getting ready; then the officiating priest or deacon splashes water with his hand from the font all over the child, but principally over the head, and while doing so he pronounces the words: "I baptize thee, etc." The Church, by ordaining that the Greek and other Oriental Churches follow the custom of their rite according to their tradition, emphasizes in a particular manner that, while the Latin Church uses the baptism of pouring, that of immersion and that of sprinkling are equally valid. We have remarked that the Catholic Church generally, but not always employed the baptism by immersion, until the 14th century; and if the custom of baptiz-

ing by pouring finally prevailed, no other reason can be ascribed for the change than that it is more convenient, more modest for women and young girls and the only practical mode for northern countries in winter. We might add also that as some schismatic oriental churches hold that immersion is the only valid manner of baptizing, the Church upholds by an objective lesson and confirms the apostolic tradition that baptism by pouring and by aspersion are equally valid, and her authority alone can make any or all of the three modes of baptizing licit and lawful.

The Church has done likewise with respect to Holy Communion under one or both forms. In the beginning it was customary—although it was left free to all to receive Communion under one species—to give Communion under both forms; then, little by little, the custom of communicating under one species was introduced. But when the heresy of the Manicheans, who abhorred the use of wine even for the Sacrifice of the Mass, sprang up, Pope Gelasius in the 5th century ordered everyone to communicate under both forms. When, however, the heresy had died out, the custom of communicating under one species prevailed once more for all those who follow the Latin rite, except for the celebrant of the Mass.

159. What is Baptism of desire?

Baptism of desire is an ardent wish to receive Baptism and to do all that God has ordained for our salvation.

The desire to receive Baptism, coupled with the detestation of sin and the perfect love of God, partially takes the place of the Baptism of water; so that by such a desire of Baptism, if Baptism itself cannot be received, original sin is blotted out, mortal sin is forgiven and habitual grace is bestowed on the soul.

It is called the Baptism of desire or Baptism of flame (flaminis), because by the grace of the Holy Ghost the heart is moved to believe, to love God and to detest the sins committed. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 66, a. 11). It is not a simple desire, but perfect contrition and perfect love of God must accompany it, together with the resolution to do all what God has commanded. The Council of Trent (Sess. 6, c. 4) implicitly teaches the effects of the Baptism of desire, when it says that justification cannot be obtained except by Baptism or its desire.

Holy Scripture in many places speaks of the effect of the pertect love of God or of perfect charity as sufficient to justify the sinner. "He that loveth Me, shall be loved by My Father

and I shall love him" (John xiv. 21). "If the wicked do penance for all his sins," says Ezechiel, "living he shall live and shall not die." The reason that perfect love of God with contrition of one's sins confers sanctifying grace, is that, whereas mortal sin takes away sanctifying grace, because by it the sinner turns away from God and attaches himself to creatures—for in doing so he loves a creature more than God—so likewise by perfect contrition he abandons sin and clings to God, esteeming God more than all created beings.

160. What is Baptism of blood?

Baptism of blood is the shedding of one's blood for the sake of Christ.

Baptism of blood is nothing less than martyrdom, which is "a testimony expressed in words, deed or sign of divine faith or of some Christian virtue, sealed by death. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 124, a. 2, et sq.). Two things are necessary for Baptism of blood: first, wounds or other sufferings from which death follows; and second, on the part of the martyr, the undergoing of all these sufferings and death for the sake of divine faith or of any Christian virtue. It may be added that a third requisite for adults is necessary, viz., a virtual attrition or perfect contrition. What about the Holy Innocents who could not "by word or sign" suffer for the Faith? The Church considers them as true martyrs, for, if they could not confess Christ by word or sign, they confessed Christ by their death. Martyrdom takes the place of Baptism of water, not only in adults but even in children. Baptism of blood likewise forgives all punishment due to sin, which cannot always be said of the Baptism of desire. We must also remark that it is not necessary, for obtaining the crown of martyrdom, that hatred of the Catholic belief should be the motive of the torturers or persecutors. The young woman, that prizes her Christian purity more than her life, and suffers death in its defense, is a true martyr; even the soldier who dies in defense of his country's rights, convinced that he is doing what is agreeable to God, by defending its integrity and its honor, would be a true martyr, provided that he inwardly protest his willingness to suffer death. It is true that the Church does not honor them as martyrs, on account of the difficulty of ascertaining what sentiments animated the dying.

161. Is Baptism of desire or of blood sufficient to produce the effects of the Baptism of water?

Baptism of desire or of blood is sufficient to produce the effects of the Baptism of water, if it is impossible to receive the Baptism of water.

Before concluding the doctrine of the Church on the three kinds of Baptism, the explanation thereof should be completed by mentioning their different effects, i. e., in what they agree and in what they differ.

1st. All three kinds of Baptism confer sanctifying grace; but Baptism of water alone imprints a character in the soul. Baptism of water by virtue of the outward sign instituted by Christ confers sanctifying grace "ex opere operato", while the same effect produced by Baptism of desire is due to the recipient's disposition, i. e., "ex opere operantis." As to Baptism of blood, the bestowal of habitual grace does not solely depend on the martyr's disposition, for in that case there would be no difference between the Baptism of desire and the Baptism of blood. We must, therefore, conclude that in the case of martyrs, sanctifying grace is bestowed on the soul by a special privilege, which God has attached to the heroism of him who dies for the Faith or for any other Christian virtue. Hence Baptism of blood may be said to cause its effects "ex opere operato" not unlike Baptism of water, as also "ex opere operantis", or due to the disposition required in adults, viz., to accept death with resignation and with a view to obeying God or doing what is agreeable to Him. An imperfect contrition is, therefore, sufficient, if the martyr knows himself to be guilty of any mortal sin. Nevertheless St. Thomas (P. III, q. 66, a. 12 to 1) and St. Alph. Ligorio (L. 6, no. 98) require a perfect contrition. No disposition is required in children martyred for their faith.

2ndly. Baptism of water and Baptism of blood remit all sins, original and actual, and all punishment due to sin, while Baptism of desire remits only the eternal punishment due to sin and a part of the temporal punishment proportionate to the candidate's love of God, his hatred of sin and his eagerness to become a child of God.

3rdly. Only the Baptism of water imprints a character in the soul, but the virgins of either sex, who will

follow the lamb wheresoever He goeth, shall sing canticles which none other can sing in the kingdom of the blessed; and the teachers and doctors who show many the way to salvation, shall shine like stars during all eternity. Martyrs shall shine with a special aureole, and this aureole of martyrdom will outshine in splendor the character or spiritual mark of the Sacrament, and many theologians maintain that this applies likewise to the aureole of virginity and the teaching of Christian doctrine.

162. What do we promise in Baptism?

In Baptism we promise to renounce Satan with all his works and pomps.

The promise of renouncing Satan is made by adults personally before Baptism is administered to them, but when children are baptized the godfather and godmother make the promise in the name of the child. The adult is bound by his promise, and so is the child bound by the promises made by the sponsors in its name. This will appear clear to anyone, who considers that those promises are obligatory upon every member of the communion of saints, and that by Baptism we become members of Christ's mystical body and of His Church. All people are bound by the natural law to seek their own salvation, and as salvation cannot be obtained without worshipping God by faith, hope and charity and by avoiding all that is opposed to those virtues, we necessarily conclude that children, when they arrive at the use of reason, are bound to do what is required by natural law, of which the promises made in Baptism are a part; besides the reception of Baptism imposes upon those who receive it a further obligation, as children of God, to promote their own salvation and the honor and glory of their heavenly Father.

As Satan is the cause of all our evils and as he himself fell through pride, envy impels him to make us lose our soul by every power at his command. The wiles of Satan are the more to be feared, because he possesses a deep knowledge of the laws

of nature and of divine revelation. Moreover, his experience of many centuries, and his envy and ruses make him a most formidable enemy. He is likewise the enemy of God; his pride, the cause of his revolt, and his hatred of God Who cast him into hell, will remain forever as a punishment of his sins. Therefore, we need not wonder that before Baptism is conferred, the person to be baptized is asked in a threefold interrogation: "Dost thou renounce Satan, and all his works, and all his pomps?" To which the catechumen or the sponsors in the name of the child, answer three times: "I do."

We must renounce not only the devil, but also all his works and all his pomps. The works of the devil are the thousand and one ways, in which he tempts us to commit sin, and all that hatred and envy can suggest, and all that malice and sagacity can invent to deceive us. Our first parents were deceived by the promise of great knowledge, a knowledge equal to that of God; but since the fall of Adam and Eve, Satan delights more in making us fall into sins of impurity, because that temptation is the most difficult to overcome. For the chaste he has other suggestions like pride, envy, jealousy, from which so many sins against our neighbor spring, besides many other sins opposed to the obligations of our state of life.

By pomps we understand the grandeur and display that the world loves so well: honor and glory and the love of riches which procure enjoyment and pleasure, good cheer, and all that flatters the senses. It is by the suggestion of these pomps that the devil tempted Our Lord, when he was allowed to take Him to a very high mountain and show Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. (Mat. iv. 1-11).

Those who have been baptized and have become children of God need not fear the temptations of the evil one, as long as they remain faithful to their duties. Those who furthermore love prayer, frequently approach the Sacraments, and delight in good works and in the practice of the virtues of their state of life, may well despise the most desperate attacks of the devil; for prayer with the Sacraments and other good works make the soul invincible against all the powers of darkness; nevertheless, it is important for us all to shun the occasions of sin and diffidence in our own strength and confidence in God will do the rest. (Cfr. Temptations in Appendix to **Manual of Perfection**).

164. Why are godfathers and godmothers given in Baptism?

Godfathers and godmothers are given in Baptism in order that they may promise in the name of the child, what the child itself would promise if it had the use of reason.

Let us not understand from this answer that the presence of godfathers and godmothers in Baptism is only a mere ceremony. The ceremonies of Baptism all have a deep meaning, and in all of them the godfather and godmother represents the child or adult to be baptized, although in the latter case the adult must answer the questions himself. Yet, we shall presently see that this is not the main reason for the sponsors' presence in the administration of this Sacrament.

The ceremonies begin at the door of the church, because an unbaptized person is not worthy to enter the temple of God. There the exorcisms take place to crush the power of Satan; a profession of faith is required from the catechumen or sponsors; salt is placed on the tongue against the spiritual corruption of the soul by sin; the sign of the cross is made on the forehead, the eyes, the breast, shoulders, and ears to enable the recipient of Baptism, by the virtue of the crucified Saviour, to serve God through all his senses; with spittle the priest touches the nostrils and ears in imitation of Christ when He cured the blind man and said: "Ephpheta, Be thou opened." The meaning of this is obvious, for after Baptism the child of God must open his mind and heart to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost. Presently, the one to be baptized is admitted to the baptistry, where the renunciation of which there was question in the preceding number, takes place, and the adult or child is anointed with the oil of catechumens on the breast and shoulders: on the breast to show that he should believe and take to heart the teachings of Christ, and on the shoulders that he should be ready to perform the Christian virtues belonging to his future state of life.

After a new protestation of faith and of willingness to receive Baptism, the cleansing water of Baptism is poured on the head. The head is now anointed with chrism, for the newly baptized is now a member of the Church and a disciple of Christ, and "Christ" means "anointed." After the sacramental ablution, infants were, in olden times, clothed in white and to adults a white garment was given to be worn for a week, but now a white kerchief takes its place, and the words that accompany it are significant of the purity of life the Christian ought to lead. Finally, by the ceremony of presenting a lighted candle, the Church wishes to teach the newly baptized Christian that hereafter his good works ought to shine before all men.

Let it be understood that when Baptism is administered by a lay person in case of necessity, parents must see to it that the child be taken to the church as

soon as practicable, so that the ceremonies of Baptism, that were omitted, may be supplied by the priest, or in order that the child may be re-baptized under condition, if there be any doubt of the validity of the private Baptism.

165. What are the obligations of a godfather and a godmother?

The obligation of a godfather and a godmother is to instruct the child in its religious duties, if the parents neglect to do so, or die.

Although the answer of the catechism is clear and correct, the obligations of godfathers and godmothers need a very careful explanation, in view of the fact that they are little understood, or if understood, are but seldom complied with.

The Council of Trent, (Sess. 24, c. 2.) following in this the ancient custom, decreed "that only one man or woman, or at most one man and one woman, stand as sponsors in Baptism." One sponsor at least is required and no more than two are allowed; and in the latter case, the sponsors should be of a different sex, while in the former case, it is advisable that the sponsor should be of the same sex as the catechumen or child. From the wording of the decree, the Council seems to intimate that one sponsor is preferable to two. If we ask why the Council forbids more than one godfather and one godmother as sponsors in Baptism, we shall find it in that popular opinion, which has well-nigh become an axiom, viz., that the obligation of many is the obligation of none. When several people undertake a joint obligation, especially in spiritual matters, an excuse is easily forthcoming for one and all, viz., that the duty falls primarily on one of the others.

The obligation of appointing at least one sponsor for Baptism, binds under pain of mortal sin, but this holds good only for a solemn Baptism, for when lay people baptize in case of grave necessity, no ceremonies accompany the Baptism and sponsors are not required; but when the ceremonies are supplied in church, a godfather or godmother must be chosen, and it is obligatory also when a priest in an extreme case of necessity baptizes and omits a portion of the ceremonies and no sponsor assists.

Now, the important question before us regards the obligations of godfathers and godmothers. The name itself implies that they stand between God and the child, or better, that they

are guarantors of the spiritual union that must exist between a baptized person and God, the Author of Baptism; they share only the religious side of the parent's duty, for the duties of parents extend to the temporal as well as to the spiritual life of the child.

St. Thomas (P. III, q. 67, a. 7, 8) devotes two articles to this question, and in these we are taught that the sponsor must consider the baptized person, for whom he is security, as a novice in the Faith, whom he has to instruct in spiritual matters and in all that pertains to a Christian life. Since this obligation belongs primarily to fathers and mothers, the sponsor is bound only when the father and mother are unwilling or unable to perform their part, or if they die. Likewise the sponsors are free from this obligation, when they know that their godchild attends the catechism classes in church, or is a pupil of a Catholic school or college, where Christian instruction is a part of the curriculum. The priest when baptizing a child will not fail to impress upon the parents as well as upon the godfather and godmother their obligation in this respect, and will point to the Catholic schools as the ordinary, sure and only practical way of conscientiously complying with their duties toward their offspring or godchild.

From the grave obligations sponsors undertake toward their godchild, we necessarily must conclude that not everyone is a fit person for a sponsor. The Roman Ritual excludes the following:

1st. Young people who have not arrived at the use of reason and therefore cannot validly act as sponsors. It is advisable that no girl under twelve and no boy under fourteen be chosen by parents.

2ndly. Those that have not been baptized, or if baptized do not know the rudiments of the Catholic religion, are also to be rejected; and it is proper that the sponsors should be confirmed; for how can they be useful and practical instructors, if they, the instructors themselves, are poorly taught or neglect that means of salvation, i. e., Confirmation.

3rdly. All non-Catholics, that is, infidels, heretics, schismatics, as well as those publicly excommunicated and those under interdict, are also excluded, for they cannot be expected to teach what they do not believe, or do not practice.

4thly. All those who lead infamous or immoral lives, or are known as public criminals, those who belong to secret societies condemned by the Church, those that are publicly known to live openly in shameful concubinage, or have contracted only a civil marriage cannot be admitted as sponsors, as long as they persist in their scandalous conduct.

Godfathers and godmothers must be chosen for their office by the parents or guardians of their godchild; but when so chosen they may select a substitute or procurator, who in their stead will answer the questions at Baptism and hold the child or touch the body of the child while Baptism is being administered.

Finally, parents and sponsors should be reminded that a spiritual relationship arises from the Sacrament of Baptism between the baptizer and the sponsors on one side and the godchild on the other; but not between the sponsors themselves. This spiritual relationship creates an impediment to marriage between either sponsor and the godchild, and between the baptizer and baptized child or person. (See impediments of marriage at the end of Lesson XXVI, On Matrimony).

LESSON THE FIFTEENTH

ON CONFIRMATION

166. What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is a Sacrament through which we receive the Holy Ghost to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ.

This answer gives us the principal effects of Confirmation: namely, that through it the Holy Ghost is received by the confirmed Christian, and that it makes him a strong and perfect Christian and a soldier of the Saviour.

The word "confirmation" itself is taken from its principal effect, which is to confirm the baptized Christian in grace and in faith, and to strengthen him by an increase of the theological virtues, which Baptism infuses into the soul with sanctifying grace and other virtues and gifts. The catechism first teaches that it is a Sacrament, and this is a dogma of our Faith, for the Council of Trent (Sess. 7) has the following: "If anyone say that Confirmation of the baptized is a superfluous ceremony and not a true or proper Sacrament, or that formerly it was nothing more than some catechetical instruction, in which those ap-

proaching youth set forth the reason of their faith before the Church, let them be anathema."

In the Acts of the Apostles (Acts viii. 14, sq.), we read that when the Apostles learned that the Samaritans had accepted the faith, Peter and John were sent and they imposed their hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost." In the same Acts, (xix. 6) we learn that Paul imposed hands upon those that had been baptized, and that when doing so, the Holy Ghost came upon them. This evidently proves that the rite was different from Baptism, for it was performed after Baptism and those, upon whom hands had been imposed, received the Holy Ghost. That the Apostles performed this rite by the authority of Christ,, there can be no doubt. We have all that is essential for a Sacrament: viz., an outward sign, institution by Christ, and the grace of the Holy Ghost.

As to the dotcrine of the Church on this point from the time of the Apostles up to the 16th century, when Luther and Calvin broached their nefarious heresy against all that is most holy, there is such an array of testimony of the early Fathers, that it is useless to recall them here. Those that wish to examine this point will find an abundance of testimony cited in the Catechism of the Council of Trent. Another proof of great weight opposed to the claim of the Protestants who deny that Confirmation is a Sacrament, because it was unknown among the early Christians and therefore is an innovation in the Church, is the consensus of the Latin and Greek Churches and of all oriental sects, who all enumerate Confirmation among the seven Sacraments.

It is not an easy matter to decide when this Sacrament was instituted by Our Lord, as Scripture does not clearly state it. The opinion and judgment of St. Thomas (P. III, q.72, a. 1, to 1) can be safely followed. He teaches us that Christ instituted this Sacrament not by exhibiting it, or by showing how it had to be administered, but by promising it, when He said: "If I do not go away, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go away, I shall send Him to you" (John vii. 39); for in this Sacrament the plenitude of the Holy Chost is given, and this was not to be done before Christ's Resurrection and Ascension. To carry out this promise, the Saviour before His Ascension enjoined upon His Apostles to go and remain in Jerusalem, and there await the coming of the Holy Ghost.

167. Who administers Confirmation?

The bishops are the ordinary ministers of Confirmation.

Note that in the answer it is said "ordinary ministers," and that means that bishops are the ministers, but not with the ex-

clusion of anyone else. The Council of Trent has it thus: "If any man says that the ordinary minister of Confirmation is not the bishop alone, but any simple priest, let him be anathema." (Trent, Sess. 7, C. 3). St. Thomas (P. III, q. 72, a. 11, c) and also the Roman Catechism give the reason, for they consider that the words of St. Paul (1 Cor. iii. 9), "You are the edifice of God," must be understood to mean that by Baptism the recipient becomes, as it were, a spiritual house, but in Confirmation the house already built is dedicated as a temple to the Holy Ghost; and it may be added that as a soldier, who enlists as such, is not accepted and enrolled by any officer, but by the king or by any one having supreme power in the army such as generals, so likewise in the Church of God Confirmation is the ordinary privilege of bishops, who by divine ordination are the leaders or generals of Christ's armies.

It was said that a bishop is the ordinary minister; yet a priest may validly administer Confirmation, as an extraordinary minister, but only when he has the jurisdiction to act as such. Who can supply the priest's deficiency? Only the Sovereign Pontiff, and the chrism must be blessed by a bishop, unless the Pope also grant the power to bless it. Of this we have numerous examples in the history of the Church, as the Council of Florence testifies, and even to this day there have been such extraordinary cases, viz., during infectious diseases and in the missionary countries in far-distant lands, or whenever the Holy Father has conferred the power on a simple priest.

168. How does the bishop give Confirmation?

The bishop extends his hands over those he confirms, prays that they may receive the Holy Ghost, and anoints the forehead of each with holy chrism in the form of a cross.

This number and the two that follow treat of the matter of form of the Sacrament: the matter is the material thing that is used and whatever is done visibly as an outward sign; and the words spoken by the minister are the form. In Baptism the material thing used is water, and with the ablution it constitutes the matter of the Sacrament.

In Confirmation chrism and the imposition of hands together form the matter of the Sacrament as water and the ablution in Baptism. Chrism is composed of olive oil and balsam. But what must we understand by the imposition of hands? There are three distinct parts to be noted in the administration of the Sacrament. As the catechism explains it, the bishop extends his hands and keeps them extended, whilst he prays that those to be confirmed may receive the Holy Ghost with His sevenfold gifts named by Isaias, the prophet. The second part consists in anointing with chrism the foreheads of those to be confirmed with the simultaneous imposition of the hands, and the third part consists in some prayers by which the bishop begs of God that the confirmed person may live up to the graces received in this Sacrament. The ceremony ends with the recital of the Apostles' Creed by all those present.

Now, neither the first nor the last part belongs to the essence and validity of the Sacrament, and there remains only the anointing with chrism and a simultaneous imposition of hands as the matter of the Sacrament. This unction with chrism together with the imposition of hands, is commonly held as the sole essential matter of Confirmation, and together with the words pronounced by the bishop as the form, it constitutes the outward sign necessary for validity.

In the citation taken from the Acts of the Apostles, no mention is made of chrism, but only of the imposition of hands. This proves that the imposition of hands is an essential part of the Sacrament, but it does not exclude the anointing. The unanimous consent of the Catholic Church with all the oriental schismatic churches and the heretical sects, which separated from the true fold in the first centuries of the Christian era, forces upon us the belief that a custom so general as the unction of chrism, had its origin in the practice of the Apostles themselves. Even if it could be proved that the Apostles did not use chrism on the two occasions mentioned in the Acts, when they undoubtedly practiced the imposition of hands, we should conclude that Christ instituted the Sacrament, but left it to His Church to determine its matter and form.

If it be asked why the forehead is anointed rather than any

other part of the body, the answer is easily forthcoming, when it is considered that the forehead is the most dignified and most conspicuous part of the body, to which is attributed the expression of determination, natural strength and vigor of mind, and that the Sacrament pours into the soul, with the plenitude of the Holy Ghost, increased strength and vigor to enable those that are confirmed to fight successfully and vanquish the implacable enemies of their salvation. Furthermore, the unction is done in the form of a cross to remind the soldier of Christ that henceforth he has to battle under the standard of the cross in order to achieve a glorious victory.

169. What is holy chrism?

Holy chrism is a mixture of olive oil and balm consecrated by the bishop.

Chrism is a word of Greek origin, and it means ointment in general; but the Christians adopted it as an appropriate name for the matter of the Sacrament of Confirmation, as an ointment that denotes a spiritual effect similar to the virtue of natural oil and balm on man's body.

Chrism is sometimes called the remote matter of the Sacrament, and the anointing with chrism in the form of the cross, the proximate matter.

Olive oil has three properties: it lights, it nourishes, and it heals. The gladiators of old were wont to anoint their bodies with oil to limber their members and to make their nerves and joints more supple and pliant. Olive oil has other properties, but these already named are amply sufficient to represent externally and to express clearly the plenitude of divine grace which flows from Christ, Who instituted Confirmation, through the Holy Ghost, Who pours it abundantly into the soul. Add to these properties of oil the sweet odor of balm, and Confirmation is shown to possess a new grace; for those that are confirmed, by reason of their many virtues, diffuse around them so sweet a spiritual odor that they may truly say with St. Paul: "We are the good odor of Christ unto God." (2 Cor. ii. 15). The Apostle refers here especially to the virtues of the early Christians who, by imitating the sweetness, humility and meekness of the Saviour, attracted many Jews and Gentiles to the service of the true God. Balm has also the property of preserving from corruption what it anoints; hence it signifies the easy preservation of the soul from the corruption of sin, when it has been prepared and, as it were, anointed and embalmed by the infused virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Propriety demands that as the bishop is the ordinary minister of the Sacrament, he also should consecrate the chrism, its remote matter.

Balsam is a resinous substance running either naturally, or by incision, from the trunk of a certain tree called Balsam of Gilead, found in the Arabian desert east of the Jordan; but any balsam that comes from a tree of the same species, no matter where grown, may be used for the chrism of Confirmation. A small quantity must certainly be employed to mix with the olive oil, pressed from the ripe fruit of the olive tree, not only on account of its significance, but because it is generally admitted that it belongs to the validity of the Sacrament. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 72, a. 3). "The second Sacrament," says the Council of Florence, "is Confirmation, whose matter is chrism, blessed by the bishop and prepared from oil, which signifies the luster of conscience, and from balm which signifies the odor of a good name."

That the chrism must be blessed by the bishop is clear from the citation, but the Sovereign Pontiff can delegate a priest to bless it, as he can delegate a priest to administer the Sacrament. Chrism is consecrated by the bishop with solemn ceremonies on Holy Thursday and is, as the catechism says, a mixture of olive oil and balm.

170. What does the bishop say in anointing the person he confirms?

In anointing the person he confirms, the bishop says: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

These words: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, etc.," are what we call the form of the Sacrament: they determine the purpose of the matter, the chrism; and matter and form together make up the outward sign of the Sacrament, for without the words, chrism would not signify or determine the grace given in the Sacrament.

Since in Holy Scripture no mention is made of the matter and form of the Sacrament, some theologians are of the opinion that Christ instituted this Sacrament only in a general way, without determining its matter and form, leaving that to the future decision of the Church. In two Sacraments only, viz., in Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, both form and matter were clearly determined by Christ.

The opinion that the matter and form of Confirmation were not fixed by Christ, but were afterwards determined by the

Church, is corroborated by the fact that in the Greek Church the form is: "The sign of the gift of the Holy Ghost," to which according to the Greek custom should be added as implied: "to be conferred upon thee by my ministry." The Church never decreed that this form is not sufficient, and furthermore, the Greeks, the Armenians and members of other heretical sects of Asia who have a similar form, have never been confirmed over again when received into the Catholic Church.

In the Latin Church no other form than that given in the catechism is valid according to the Roman Catechism. In it, 1st, the words: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross" denote the sign of the soldier of Christ, i. e., the Christian's military service; 2ndly, the words: "I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation" denote the effect of the Sacrament, to wit, strengthening grace; and the words: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" express the cause of grace, viz., the Blessed Trinity, Which accepts the service of the soldier of Christ and through the Sacrament bestows all the vigor and strength required. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 72, a. 4).

171. What is meant by anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross?

By anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross is meant that the Christian who is confirmed must openly profess and practice his faith, never be ashamed of it and rather die than deny it.

(Cf. No. 326, where it is explained when we are bound to make open profession of our faith).

The Catechism of the Council of Trent gives the significance of anointing the forehead with chrism in the following words: "The forehead of the person to be confirmed is anointed with sacred chrism; for in this Sacrament the Holy Spirit pours Himself into the souls of the faithful, and imparts to them increased strength and courage, to enable them, in the spiritual contest, to fight manfully and to resist successfully their most implacable foes. They are, therefore, told that henceforth they are not to be deterred by fear or shame—feelings of which the countenance is the principal index—from the open confession of the name of Christ. Besides, the mark by which the Christian is distinguished from all others, as a soldier is distinguished by his peculiar

military badges, should be impressed on the forehead, the most dignified and conspicuous part of the human form." (St. Thos. P. III, q. 72, a. 9).

172. Why does the bishop give the person he confirms a slight blow on the cheek?

The bishop gives the person he confirms a slight blow on the cheek, to put him in mind that he must be ready to suffer even death for the sake of Christ.

The person confirmed receives a gentle slap on the cheek, says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, to remind him that, as a courageous champion, he should be prepared to brave with unflinching determination all adversities for the name of Christ.

Courage undoubtedly is the most necessary quality of the soldier, but his courage should be moderate and temperate, so as not to degenerate into the ferocity of a savage animal. His courage should be prudent, so as not to expose himself uselessly to danger, and his courage should be just to non-combatants and not exceed the limits of civilized warfare.

Those are the four cardinal qualities of a soldier, and they form likewise the four cardinal virtues of a soldier of Christ: viz., prudence, fortitude, justice and temperance; but how different a soldier of Christ from the soldier of one's country in the practice of these fundamental qualities! The soldier fighting under the banner of Christ has three different enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil, and what a different warfare has to be undertaken to overcome each one: the world by flight, i. e., by shunning it as well as its maxims, and by loving what it hates and by despising what it loves; the devil by courageous resistance, and the flesh by subduing its concupiscences. But there is one grace and remedy common to the three warfares, so well indicated in the ceremony of the blow on the cheek, a remedy that is sure to bring victory: humiliations, sufferings and penances, the invincible arms of the Christian soldier; for the world fears them, the devil hates them and the flesh is subdued by them.

Justice to ourselves and to others demands that our fortitude be tempered with prudence in the use of these arms of self-imposed mortifications, but when they come to us from the hand of God or of our fellow-men, they ought always to be welcomed with gladness and joy; even death itself is a boon to those that are humiliated and suffer for Christ's sake. The victory can never be a decisive one while we live, for the strug-

gle will end only with our death. Nevertheless, whilst we live it will bring us peace. So the bishop prays, when giving the slight blow—the type and sign of deep humiliation—saying: "Pax tecum," peace be to thee, peace, which the world cannot give, of which the devil tries to deprive us, and which is the reward of those who successfully combat their passions and evil inclinations, suffering joyfully all humiliations and death itself for Christ's sake.

All the graces conferred in Confirmation, as well as the virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost, principally tend to make us firm, constant, and intrepid heroes in the warfare for victory, i. e., for salvation, under the banner of Christ. This constancy is expressed in the words "I confirm thee", and is comprised in the virtue of fortitude. Two things must be considered in the virtue of fortitude: it fears no danger in the practice of all other Christian virtues, and it attacks with courage and constancy, but also with prudence and moderation all vices in their causes, whether they spring from worldliness, from the ruses and artifices of the archfiend, or from our worst passions. The greatest temporal evil here below is undoubtedly death, which takes away from us all that the world contains; but fortitude despises it as well as all lesser evils. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 123, a. 4). Christians are taught, by the Captain Whose colors they follow, that heroic soldiers should not fear the death of the body, but that the eternal death of the body and soul is alone to be feared. (Mat. xiv. 28; Heb. xi. 36, sq.). Such was the fortitude of the Apostles after receiving the Holy Ghost on Pentecost Day, and of the heroic army of martyrs and of many hundreds of saints, who have abandoned all to follow in the footsteps of the Saviour. Among them there are several degrees: the first degree includes all those who courageously comply with their duties, profess their faith openly, in spite of the taunts and the ridicules of the godless, irreligious and libertines; the second embraces those who constantly mortify their passions, vices and sensuality; the third without omitting the other two, numbers those who brave death for the temporal and spiritual welfare of their neighbor; and in the fourth are found those who willingly and gladly give up their lives for Jesus Christ.

If someone would ask, why, in spite of the graces, strength and fortitude received in Confirmation, so many do not live up to their Christian duties, and finally abandon the practice of their religion, the answer will be easily forthcoming: they abandon prayer, private and public devotions and the frequent reception of the Sacraments, all means which keep alive the effect of Confirmation. Fortitude like all other virtues needs prac-

tice. Can the soldier of Christ that fears the least trouble, pain and humiliation, and seeks before all worldly pleasures and honors, hope to overcome his enemy, when in the former case he throws away his arms and in the latter treats his enemy familiarly? The practice of fortitude should begin in the mind and heart by facing whatever obstacles may come in the way of our duty and forthwith courageously deciding to despise them and to suffer any inconvenience or pain, rather than to abandon the fight. Does the combat seem unequal and the violence to be done to oneself frighten anyone? The courageous soldier will find in the Saviour who beckons him on, superabundant help, constancy and strength in his weakness. The God-Man is besides our model: He demands of us nothing He did not practice in the flesh. Finally how glorious for the Christian soldier to fight under the leadership of a God, Whose promise of victory cannot fail, and Who with His own hands will place on the brow of the victors, as a reward for their constancy and fortitude, the brilliant crown of immortal glory!

173. To receive Confirmation worthily, is it necessary to be in the state of grace?

To receive Confirmation worthily, it is necessary to be in the state of grace.

Since the supernatural life of the soul begins with Baptism, it is evident that in Confirmation, whose principal effect is to confirm the graces received in Baptism with the abundance of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, no strength, no vigor could be bestowed on a soul which is still deprived of supernatural life through original sin. Again, if Confirmation is conferred on an adult who has by mortal sin lost his baptismal innocence and sanctifying grace, he must first be reconciled to his God by the Sacrament of Penance. To receive Confirmation in the state of mortal sin, is a sacrilege, a heinous offense against the Redeemer, Who out of the abundance of His

love instituted the Sacrament. (See the explanation on the Sacraments of the Living, No. 143, 144; also No. 141, 142).

174. What special preparation should be made to receive Confirmation?

Persons of an age to learn should know the chief mysteries of faith and the duties of a Christian, and be instructed in the nature and effects of this Sacrament.

Confirmation can be validly conferred upon baptized infants, and in that case no preparation is required. This custom of confirming infants, which was common in the early ages of the Church, has been abandoned almost entirely, and is in use only in places where bishops have to administer extensive dioceses, and where communication between the different parts of a diocese is exceedingly difficult. Even in such cases the present discipline of the Church favors the practice of granting to a simple priest the extraordinary power of conferring this Sacrament.

By Confirmation the recipient becomes a soldier of Jesus Christ. The arms of the Christian soldier are: 1st. Faith. He should be instructed in the principal truths of his holy Religion contained in the Apostles' Creed and understand the general meaning of each article; hence it is not sufficient that he should have learned the Apostles' Creed by heart. As a member of Christ's army he should also know what distinguishes him from those that are fighting under other banners, and he should likewise have learned what God and His Church demand of him. 2nd. Hope. All soldiers hope to gain victory, but this is not possible without the use of proper arms, which use he should understand, not only theoretically but practically. Confirmation itself makes the Christian strong and perfect, provided he be properly disposed, and for this he should have a clear knowledge of the nature of the Sacrament, and of its salutary effects; for no one can fully desire what he does not understand. A few days of prayer or a retreat, but above all the fervent reception of the Sacrament of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist are to be

recommended to all those who are about to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. 3rd. Charity, which consists in the love of God and of one's neighbor and in compliance with one's duties, is the last requisite for the fruitful reception of this Sacrament. Since a tried soldier is certainly to be preferred to the soldier that has never been under fire, especially if vigorously contested battles are to be fought, so also the Christian soldier should have been prepared for the greater struggle against the enemies of his salvation by conquering them in little things: respect for authority, obedience to superiors, diligence in the performance of duty, kindness towards others, love of prayer, the shunning of all sin and even the occasions of it, and finally the frequent recourse to the Sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist.

Formerly the Church enjoined a fast from midnight, and this is still one of the best preparations to excite in us an ardent desire of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

175. Is it a sin to neglect Confirmation?

It is a sin to neglect Confirmation, especially in these evil days when faith and morals are exposed to so many and such violent temptations.

It is a grievous sin to neglect Confirmation because as long as we live upon this earth, life will remain a struggle and a warfare. These three: the devil, the world and the flesh will never cease endangering our salvation. Complete and final victory is assured only by a happy death. The devil is our archenemy. His hatred of God and his jealousy of our spiritual welfare goad him on; and his superior intelligence and the knowledge he has of our nature and of our individual weaknesses, united to his experience of many centuries, make him a most formidable enemy. "Your adversary the devil, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour; whom resist ye, strong in faith." (1 Peter v. 8, 9).

What arms shall we wield to oppose him? An iron will and indomitable courage? Alas! our very nature, our evil inclinations will make us an easy prey to his insatiable and astute hatred. Our flesh and its concupiscences, the pride of life, the love of glory and of ease, and the search after wealth, are also inimical to our eternal welfare, and man is himself his own enemy and a natural ally of the devil. Original sin has made us what we are; our nature is corrupted, our intellect has been obscured, our judgment is warped and unreliable when left to itself; our will has been weakened, our passions and evil inclinations strengthened, and these stifle, as it were, the last effort of the feeble will still left in us. Where shall we go for succor? Perhaps in the busy world about us? Again we are deceived if we have such a confidence. That very world, of which our friends, our relations and ourselves form a part, is also conspiring for our ruin.

There was a time when the Christians, following the example of their Master, lived a simple, sober, frugal life, when the humble life of the rich gave them the means to provide for the needy, when worldly goods were common property, when justice reigned supreme, and when the love of neighbor, second only to the love of God, united the whole Christian family into one compact, homogeneous body with charity as its connecting bond. Now, alas! the maxims of the world have supplanted the doctrines of the Gospel. Selfishness, commercialism, love of wealth, of preferment, of honor and glory, of enjoyments and pleasures and of bodily comfort, are alone pursued, and the general difference in matters of religion makes reform in society practically impossible. Truly, these are evil times when the world is effectively lined up with the two other enemies of our salvation to wrest souls from virtue and drive them into the jaws of hell.

The only course left us to escape the general ruin and utter degradation, is to seek supernatural aid from God, which He bestows principally through prayer, the Sacraments and the practice of virtue. Among these aids to salvation, Confirmation was instituted to cure the very evils which we deplore, for it, above all others, gives strength and courage to overcome and subdue all our enemies. This is precisely the reason why we receive the Holy Ghost in this Sacrament: we become by it true soldiers of Christ; its sacramental graces are the arms given to the Christian soldier, not only to ward off the combined attacks of our three enemies, but to subdue them by successful counterattacks; for the Christian should not wait until he is attacked, but should weaken the enemies so as to make victory assured. To attain this success, a strong and determined will is indispensable; courage born of sure victory must accompany all our efforts. Where will this supernatural aid, so absolutely

necessary to success, come from, but from the very Sacrament, so little appreciated and by some even neglected, which makes us strong and perfect Christians, to whom nothing is wanting to gain the victory over all our enemies. With strong and perfect faith, we should resist the devil as St. Peter exhorts us; with a humble, sober and frugal life we should counteract the evil maxims of the world; by an austere and mortified life we should subdue our passions, and Confirmation which makes the Christian a perfect soldier, will supply all those means. This will become still clearer to all when we have considered the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Ghost, bestowed upon us in the Sacrament of Confirmation: they will form the subject of the next lesson.

LESSON THE SIXTEENTH

ON THE GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY GHOST

176. Which are the effects of Confirmation?

The effects of Confirmation are an increase of sanctifying grace, the strengthening of our faith and the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The effects of Confirmation are four:

1st. Being a Sacrament of the Living, Confirmation confers an increase of sanctifying grace, if no obstacle is placed to its efficacy, such as the lack of Baptism, an unforgiven mortal sin, or the want of a proper intention. To this increase of sanctifying grace is attached a greater abundance of all the virtues and of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

2nd. It bestows upon us sacramental graces, that is, an habitual inclination, a power and vigor to practice the Faith with alacrity and determination, and even to seal it with our blood if necessary, together with the right to actual graces to be bestowed when duty or spiritual advantages oblige or prompt us to confess the Faith internally or to profess it openly.

3rd. It imprints an indelible character in the soul, to distinguish the soldiers of Christ from those who are as yet but children of God; for by it we are destined to

a new service, viz., to fight valiantly against the enemies of God and of our own salvation.

4th. By ecclesiastical law it creates a spiritual relationship between the sponsors on one side and the recipient of Confirmation and his or her parents on the other; and as in Baptism, there results an impediment to marriage between either sponsor and the recipient of the Sacrament, and between the sponsors and the recipient's parents.

The manner in which Confirmation strengthens faith will be explained when we speak of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

177. Which are the gifts of the Holy Ghost?

The gifts of the Holy Ghost are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and the fear of the Lord.

All the graces bestowed on the soul are gifts of the Holy Ghost, because the Holy Will of the Father and of the Son, or Divine Love, is the origin and principle of all supernatural gifts and graces. Hence all the means of salvation are principally ascribed to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, as omnipotence and creation are attributed to the Father and wisdom to the Son. (Cf. No. 32).

From the preceding number 176 and the present number we should not conclude that the graces, and virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost are something proper to the Sacrament of Confirmation only and are not given in other Sacraments. The same graces are given in Baptism also, but not in the same manner, and for a different purpose. In Baptism they are given to preserve our innocence, and in Confirmation to strengthen, to fortify and invigorate the soul against all attacks from within and from without.(Roman Catechism, No. 17). The Apostles without doubt were baptized before the death of their Master, but they were enjoined to await the coming of the Holy Ghost before they would go forth to preach to all nations. Again, the same graces, virtues and gifts are likewise conferred on the recipient in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist,

but there they tend especially to perfect the spiritual life and to unite us with Christ. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 79, a. 1 to 1).

It must further be remarked that the gifts of the Holy Ghost are habitual graces, and the Angelic Doctor seems to place the difference between them and the infused, intellectual and moral virtues in this, that they dispose the forces and strength of the soul to obey promptly the inspirations and motions of the Holy Ghost. (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 68, a. 1, 3). Furthermore, they suppose the existence in the soul of the three theological virtues, the intellectual virtues and the moral virtues, which they make more perfect and active by the internal motions of the Spirit and a promptness to welcome and obey His inspirations.

There are three classes of virtues according to St. Thomas (I. 2, q. 68, a. 8), theological, intellectual and moral. By the theological virtues the mind of man is united to God; by the intellectual virtues, his reason is enlightened and developed; by the moral virtues the appetitive forces are perfected to obey reason; by the gifts of the Holy Ghost the forces or faculties of the soul become disposed to obey the divine motion. Just as the intellectual virtues regulate the moral virtues, so also the theological virtues regulate the gifts of the Holy Ghost. From this relation we infer that the theological virtues are the first in order and dignity or excellence; next, the intellectual and moral virtues are supposed to exist in the soul before the gifts; but these latter are the more excellent as they perfect the intellectual virtues of wisdom, science and intelligence, as well as all the moral virtues, humility, obedience, etc.

The gifts are enumerated in the answer in the same order as in Isaias (Is. xi. 2, 3). The prophet begins with the most excellent, wisdom, and gradually descends to the beginning of all wisdom and of all gifts, the fear of the Lord; but the catechism in its explanation has inverted the order for the better understanding of their specific effects upon the soul that enters the road towards perfection, by avoiding sin through fear of God and then by rising gradually by different gifts or special graces of God to the highest rung of the ladder, namely, wisdom. Further remarks on the gifts are reserved until a clearer understanding of the specific nature of each has been gained.

178. Why do we receive the gift of the fear of the Lord?

We receive the gift of the fear of the Lord to fill us with the dread of sin.

"A wise man feareth and declineth from evil," says

Holy Writ (Prov. xiv. 16), and "by the fear of the Lord every one declineth from evil" (Prov. xv. 27); from which we understand that the first step by which the sinner is ordinarily converted from his evil ways, is the fear of God, Who being all-wise and all-holy punishes all sin in justice and truth, that is, according to His infinite justice and His infinite wisdom. But we must not conclude from this that anyone may abandon all fear of God, when he has abandoned a sinful life. The wise man continues to dread the great evil of sin, in order to expiate it the more, and to keep away from all danger of it. He knows full well that he is prone to evil, and, therefore, he is diffident of himself; but the more he advances in wisdom the more he confides in the goodness of God, and his fear of God is tempered by a firm confidence in his Saviour's merits and by a sincere and consoling trust in God's mercy. The fear of the Lord is then a reverential fear, by which we subject ourselves to the will of God, and as a consequence, dread sin which He detests and abhors.

179. Why do we receive the gift of piety?

We receive the gift of piety to make us love God as a Father and obey Him because we love Him.

Our Douay Edition of the Latin Vulgate has "godliness" instead of "piety." We are not concerned about the word, but about the sense of this second gift.

When the sinner has abandoned his evil ways principally through fear, he needs a new gift to advance one step farther towards perfection, and the most logical and natural help must lie in a change of the motive of his dread of sin, i. e., from fear to love of God. At first his love of self more than anything else makes him detest and dread sin, but by the gift of godliness or piety he is brought to the consideration of God, not as an avenger of evil, but as a Father by Whom he is loved and Who demands love in return. Hence this gift of piety disposes the confirmed Christian promptly to

render to God all worship and obedience as to a Father, as well as honor and submission to those whom God has placed over him. Piety differs from the virtue of religion only in this, that by the latter God is worshipped as the Creator and Ruler of the universe, and all civil authority is honored as the source of law and order.

180. Why do we receive the gift of knowledge?

We receive the gift of knowledge to enable us to discover the will of God in all things.

The catechism means here by all things, all material things created by God for the use of man, in so far as these may lead us to God, by the knowledge we have of their aptitude and usefulness in manifesting to us God's providence, bounty, omnipotence, etc. Even human events and all that happens in this world of ours are so many reminders of the fatherly care with which God disposes all things for our good. To this end Christ taught us that we should not be solicitous about what we shall eat or drink or wherewith we shall be clothed, for "every hair in our head is counted and not a hair shall fall from our head without the will of our Father Who is in heaven." Not only the desirable things of this world, but even misfortunes, injustice from our fellow-men, sickness and all untoward events, if well understood, are so many means to lead us to God and to make us say: "Thou hast done all things well, Oh, Lord." Such knowledge increases our piety and godliness, and our trust in God in all the vicissitudes of life enables us to preserve that peace of mind so necessary to our advancement towards perfection.

181. Why do we receive the gift of fortitude?

We receive the gift of fortitude to strengthen us to do the will of God in all things.

Without the gift of fortitude man is apt to be frightened at the difficulties that beset him in the service of

God. This gift is, more than any other, one of the effects of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The soldier of Christ has many enemies, and the warfare must go on until his last breath; because death alone can secure him the final victory. He will do well to foresee as far as he can any difficulties and possible reverses, and as a valiant soldier spurred on by grace and the hope of final victory, he will resolutely go forth to battle. Even then there are many unexpected obstacles which he cannot forsee, and in all these as well as in those of which he may have had foreknowledge, the gift of fortitude will give him strength to bear all adversities and to undertake the most arduous duties.

Of this fortitude many holy men have given us striking examples. Moses had fortitude as deliverer of the people of Israel from the yoke of Pharaoh and as the intrepid leader of the people of God during forty years in the desert. What fearless courage in the lives of Josuah, Samson, David, of Job and Tobias, of the Maccabees and of the Apostles! But above all what admirable conduct and heroic fortitude was that of our Saviour during His long passion, and in His death on the cross!

182. Why do we receive the gift of counsel?

We receive the gift of counsel to warn us of the deceit of the devil and of the danger to salvation.

When a business man encounters any difficulty, he takes counsel with himself, that is, he considers all the ways and means by which he may ward off any danger to his business and grasp every opportunity of success. Often a prompt decision is required. When a general in battle is beset with a new enemy, or an unexpected attack has been delivered on one of his lines, he takes counsel with his staff to avert defeat.

A prompt determination follows the deliberation. Likewise the soldier of Christ meets with many dangers from within and without, often serious and unforseen

ones. Deliberation is often out of the question; he must act promptly, especially with his wily enemy, the devil, whose attacks are the stronger when one feels oneself most secure. It is here that the Holy Ghost comes to his aid. As the gift of counsel is an habitual gift, he is disposed by it to resolve and determine promptly what remains for him to do in order to vanquish his arch-enemy and overcome all obstacles. The Holy Ghost then enlightens him to find forthwith the proper means, and strenghtens him to adopt vigorously the proposed resolution to overcome the danger to his salvation. This gift will appear the more necessary and urgent, when we reflect that our wily enemy and his dupes in the world often clothe themselves as angels of light to deceive us.

183. Why do we receive the gift of understanding?

We receive the gift of understanding to enable us to know more clearly the mysteries of faith.

1st. By the gift of knowledge we come to an understanding of how nature and all things around us should lead us to God, even the seemingly fortuitous events that happen daily, as well as the extraordinary occurrences that are encountered more seldom.

2nd. Our attention is also called to the necessity of being enlightened in all things that primarily regard our eternal destiny: the justice of God and the necessity of satisfaction for sin committed; redemption and the atonement by Christ's sufferings and death; the mysteries of the life of Christ and of His holy doctrine; grace and the means of grace, the Sacraments; the sublimity of the virtues to be practized by the Christian soldier, especially the virtues of faith, hope and charity; the necessity of prayer and of the Church and its mission upon earth; the Church militant and its union with the suffering and triumphant Church and all things whatsoever pertaining to the supernatural life of the soul.

To give such an understanding of all things either

necessary or salutary for the spiritual life and for an increase in virtue, is the work of the Holy Ghost; and this gift of understanding teaches each one of us according to his state of life, how supernatural things may conduce to our advancement towards spiritual perfection.

184. Why do we receive the gift of wisdom?

We receive the gift of wisdom to give us a relish for the things of God, and to direct our whole life and all our actions to His honor and glory.

Wisdom is the greatest of all the gifts of the Holy Ghost: as an intellectual gift, it contains both knowledge and understanding; and as a superior moral virtue, it directs all our desires, our words and actions toward the greatest good, i. e., toward the sanctification and perfection of our soul. By wisdom we not only understand the use we should make of material and worldly things, of spiritual and supernatural things useful for salvation; but we are also disposed to obey promptly the impulse of the divine Spirit and to direct our thoughts, words and actions towards God in conformity with the Divine Will.

Wisdom leads to perfection or perfect Charity, and the wise man that acts in accordance with the inspiration and movement of the gift of wisdom, is the perfect man. He participates in some manner in the Divine Wisdom. Hence, although wisdom is inferior to perfect Charity, he that in all things obeys the direction and movement of wisdom, will surely reach the perfect state which God demands from every one, according to the condition of life in which he is placed. (Cf. St. Thos.)

185. Which are the Beatitudes?

The beatitudes are:

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

2. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.
3. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.
4. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.
8. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. v. 1. sq.)

1st. The poor in spirit are those who are not attached by will or desire to the goods of the world. Hence, the poor in spirit are those who have no attachment to riches, but seek their happiness in good works, live soberly and part freely with their riches to alleviate the misery and the want of their neighbor; those who, being poor, bear their unhappy lot with resignation to the will of God; those who follow the counsels of the Saviour and distribute their worldly goods among the poor and who voluntarily embrace poverty or enter a religious community, to which they abandon the administration and the income of all they possess, by making the vow of poverty; all these shall obtain as a reward the riches of the kingdom of heaven.

2ndly. The meek are those who are not revengeful but forgiving, bear no hatred and do good even to those that hate and persecute them. "Learn of me because I am meek and humble of heart," says the Saviour. Subjects should feel kindly towards their masters and rulers, and honor them with humble submission. These will possess the land. By the "land" may be understood either this earth, which shall be renewed and beautified after its destruction by fire before the day of judgment, or the promised land of heaven, our future home; or finally the "land" may mean peace, contentment and happiness in store for the meek even in this life, for "the Lord lifteth up the meek." (Ps. cxlvi. 6).

3rdly. Those that mourn and shall be comforted are the many unfortunates of this world, whatever be their misfortune, who suffer their trials and tribulations with patience. The blessing includes also those who voluntarily flee from worldly enjoyments, weep for their sins and the sins of others, and seek their

happiness and consolation in God's service. The sadness that is of God brings salvation through penance, but the sadness of the world leads to death. (*2* Cor. vii. 10). Those that mourn in this life will find consolation in God on earth and hereafter obtain the real joys of heaven.

4thly. To hunger and thirst after justice is to desire with an intense zeal the honor and glory of God, to give to God and man all that is due them, to conform oneself in all things to the will of God and to do for our neighbor what he could reasonably expect. Those that thus hunger and thirst shall be filled with joy and peace of mind and heart like the hungry and thirsty who are satiated after a long fast.

5thly. The merciful are those who compassionate their neighbors' miseries and relieve their wants by deeds of charity. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx. 35). The merciful shall be recompensed by mercy and forgiveness, for God will reward temporal gifts by spiritual favors. (Cf. **Manual of Perfection**—"Works of Mercy").

6thly. The pure of heart are the saints upon earth, who, having received mercy from God and the remission of their sins, practice perfect charity. The perfect and saints alone can enjoy the sight of God in the beatific vision.

7thly. There are three degrees to the virtue of peacemaking: the first consist in making peace with God; the second, in making and keeping peace with every neighbor, and the third, in making peace between neighbors who are estranged or in restoring friendship where there is hatred. Whereas in the last named degree more than in the others, we imitate Christ Jesus Who came on earth to reconcile us with His Father in heaven. They who practice that degree, will participate in the Sonship of the Saviour and be called and really be, children of God.

8thly. Those that suffer persecution for justice's sake are those that perform all their duties towards God and man and being persecuted therefor, suffer patiently all affronts and even death itself. To them belongs clearly the kingdom of heaven with eminent honor and glory during all eternity.

We conclude with the offer God makes us in every one of the beatitudes, according to the beautiful idea of St. Augustine, whose sense we quote, though not his exact words. He represents Our Lord as saying: "I have something to sell."—"What is it, my Lord?"—"The kingdom of heaven."—"With what can it be bought?"—"A kingdom with poverty, its glory with humility, its happiness with grief, its satiation with hunger, its consolation with compassion, its beatific vision with purity, its peace with labor, and its life with death."

There is a gradation, a scale or ladder of perfection in the beatitudes. The first three remove the obstacles to perfection, viz., riches, honors and pleasures; and the others lead gradually

to a pure and heroic life. (Cf. A Lapide, also St. Thos. I. 2, q. 69).

The fourth is undoubtedly the beginning of sanctity and holiness, for the first means of perfection is the constant desire of it; the fifth and sixth are means of advancing in sanctity, viz., by works of mercy and by keeping oneself free from all sins, for in that a pure life consists; the pure of heart alone can be true peacemakers, which is the seventh; and all the seven virtues in practice make one the true imitator of the Saviour, for he that is pure reconciles enmities between men and God as well as among men themselves. Finally one can do nothing more, to become more perfect, than to lay down one's life for God, and that is the eighth.

186. Which are the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost?

The twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost are charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, faith, modesty, continency and chastity.

These good works enumerated by St. Paul (Thess. v. 22, 23) are fruits which the Holy Ghost communicates to us, and they contain a certain sweetness, a certain attraction, an inward delight together with the unction and odor of sanctity, which testifies the inner operation of the Holy Ghost, and spreads around the odor of Christ; for such is the effect of these virtues that others seeing the contentment, peace and happiness of those that practice them, feel inclined to imitate their example.

St. Paul in the citation contrasts these works of the spirit with the works of the flesh, named in the three preceding verses, and as he enumerates seventeen vices and only twelve fruits, the presumption is that he has named only the twelve principal fruits.

Fruit is the last thing a tree brings forth, and the fruits of the Holy Ghost are effects of the infused virtues, of the intellectual and moral virtues, of the gifts of the Holy Ghost and of the beatitudes.

What is then the difference between fruits and gifts and virtues? Virtues and gifts are, according to St. Thomas, habitual dispositions and sentiments of the soul, and these may become fruits or beatitudes. All virtues and gifts become or produce fruits; they are fruits when informed by the love of God and of our neighbor, proved and manifested by inward and outward acts, provided God grants to the practice of a special vir-

tue a special sweetness and delightful savor. Beatitudes are special virtues, manifested by actions to which the Saviour has attached special promises.

Of the fruits named by St. Paul, the first fruit, charity, is as it were the root of all good and meritorious works and delectable fruits, for on it depend the merit and sweetness of all virtuous actions. The next four fruits are either the effects of charity or specific fruits regarding our duties towards God, although patience and longanimity may refer also to our trials coming from our neighbor, but patience and longanimity would not be fruits, unless those trials be borne for the love of God. The next four regard the duties to our neighbor, for we may take it for granted that faith in this passage of the Epistle to the Thessalonians means fidelity and not the theological virtue of faith, for charity cannot exist without faith and hope during our mortal life on earth. The three last fruits refer to our duties to ourselves.

(For an explanation of each particular fruit see St. Thomas I. 2, q. 70, a. 3.)

LESSON THE SEVENTEENTH

ON THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

187. What is the Sacrament of Penance?

Penance is a Sacrament in which the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven.

The Catechism here asks not what Penance is, but what the Sacrament of Penance is. Penance may be considered as a Sacrament, and also as an integral part of the Sacrament, in which a penance is imposed by the priest on the penitent, or it may be considered as a virtue. In the last sense the word was employed by our Saviour when He said: "Unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish."

Here Penance as a Sacrament only demands our attention, and an attention proportionate to the importance and dignity of the subject to be treated. It is also a Sacrament of frequent use, for it can be received as often as one has sinned after Baptism; yea, if one had committed only one venial sin in his life, that venial sin should be deplored as long as he lives, and

it would be sufficient matter for absolution as often as he receives the Sacrament with sufficient contrition. But for the greater number of people, this Sacrament is as necessary to salvation as Baptism, i. e., "for those who have fallen into mortal sin after Baptism, the Sacrament of Penance is as necessary to salvation as is Baptism for those who have never been baptized." (Trent. Sess. 6, ch. 14, and Sess. 14, ch. 3).

Therefore, it is called, by St. Jerome, the second plank of salvation (Baptism being the first) in the shipwreck of humanity caused by the fall of our first parents.

As a Sacrament, Penance must be a visible sign of what is done in the soul, or it must be an outward sign of inward grace, instituted by Christ. But whence, it may be asked, comes the necessity of the Sacrament, for "if the wicked do penance for all his sin which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment and justice, living he shall live and shall not die." "I desire not, saith the Lord, the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." (Ezech. xviii. 21-28).

In the explanation of the Sacraments in general, several reasons were given for their institution as outward signs, and now we add the following observations to elucidate this doctrine more clearly in regard to Penance.

1. The first reason why Our Lord instituted this Sacrament is to remove from our mind all uncertainty as to our pardon, for otherwise who could assure himself that he has sincerely turned away from his evil ways, that he has done sufficient penance for his sin and that he does what is right and just, as the Prophet Ezechiel requires, to obtain pardon? In the Sacrament of Penance, on the contrary, the very judge that has to pronounce sentence, is subject to the same trials and temptations as the sinner himself; he fully sympathizes with the sinner's misery, he tries to dispose the penitent prop-

erly and refuses to pronounce a favorable judgment only when he finds the sinner entirely unworthy. What more consoling and encouraging words can a penitent hear than those by which the judge in the tribunal of Penance dismisses him, when he says: "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." (Mat. ix. 2) or something equivalent as: "Go and sin no more." (John viii. 11).

2. Much less is required for pardon of sin in the tribunal of Penance than without it, as will be explained when we treat of contrition.

3. By this Sacrament we are reminded that by the sacred blood of Christ alone, sins can be washed away; and, therefore, as this Sacrament is full of blessings for all, its institution is consonant with the goodness and wisdom of the Redeemer, Who shed His blood to wash away all sin and iniquity.

The outward sign of this Sacrament signifies what is done in the soul: the penitent approaches the tribunal of Penance and by words and actions acknowledges that he is a sinner, seeks pardon from God, and is now fully determined to sin no more. The priest also by words and actions sits as a judge, armed with the power to forgive or retain the sins of the penitent before him, and as such a judge, he pronounces the sentence; and both penitent and judge are aware of the import of the words of the Saviour: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

In this Sacrament no material thing is used like water, chrism, holy oil, bread or wine; but the acts of the penitent, viz., contrition, confession and satisfaction constitute the matter of the Sacrament. (Trent Sess. 24, ch. 3 and 4.)

These acts are integral parts of the Sacrament, for they are required by divine institution and without them the penitent could not hope for pardon. The penitent's sins not being visible, but secret, can be called only in

some sense, the remote matter, but they are the subject of contrition, confession and satisfaction, the acts of the penitent. For, why does one grieve, what does one confess, and for what is a satisfaction imposed? These acts suppose sin, for without sin there would be nothing to be sorry for, nothing to confess, nothing to be atoned for.

The form of the Sacrament is found in the words: "I absolve thee," pronounced by the priest when the sentence is favorable to the penitent and is announced to him. We have now all that is necessary to constitute a Sacrament: the acts of the penitent and the action of the priest as the judge, making up the outward sign, the form or the sentence, and the granting of grace that blots out sin, and finally the institution of the Sacrament by Christ.

188. How does the Sacrament of Penance remit sin and restore to the soul the friendship of God?

The Sacrament of Penance remits sin and restores to the soul the friendship of God by means of the absolution of the priest.

From what has been said in the previous number and from the answer in this, we understand what the Sacrament of Penance is, and in what it consists. It is a Sacrament of the New Law instituted by Christ in the form of a tribunal to forgive by the sacramental absolution the sins of those who confess them with a contrite heart.

1) In the Mosaic Law we find several precepts relating to the confession of sins and the sacrifices to be offered by the sinner. Nevertheless, neither confession nor sacrifices could forgive sin, but they disposed the sinner to the virtue of penance by which sin might be forgiven. In the New Law the priest forgives the sins by the absolution.

2) Instituted by Christ; for "The Lord then principally instituted this Sacrament of Penance . . . . when having risen from the dead, He breathed on His disciples, saying: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.'" (Trent Sess. 14, On Penance, ch. 1).

3) In the form of a tribunal of reconciliation; for the penitent is the guilty one; he is his own accuser and his sole witness, to be believed whether testifying in his favor or against himself; and the priest is the judge announcing the sentence.

4) To forgive all sins of whatever nature or kind, both venial and mortal.

5) By the sacramental absolution of the priest. This point will form the subject of the next number.

6) To those that confess their sins. The necessity of confession as a condition of forgiveness will be explained in No. 208.

7) With a contrite heart, that is, with a true sorrow for the sins committed, and this sorrow contains the resolution of sinning no more. Sorrow for sins and a purpose of sinning no more will be explained hereafter.

189. How do you know that the priest has the power of absolving from the sins committed after Baptism?

I know that the priest has the power of absolving from the sins committed after Baptism, because Jesus Christ granted that power to the priests of His Church when He said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

The Lutherans in the Confession of Augsburg admitted three sacraments: Baptism, The Lord's Supper and Absolution, and they declared them to be true sacraments; but we know that the practice of confession was soon abandoned, for even Luther complained that the people had become more wicked since the abolition of Confession. Calvin did not oppose confession, but he spoke of it in such a manner as to let us infer that the priest does not forgive the sins, but only declares them forgiven.

The English Episcopalians still claim for their priests the power of forgiving sins, as is evidenced by the ceremonies of their ordination, and by their ritual for the visitation of the sick: absolution is prescribed, but the obligation of confessing it not enjoined upon their members. In their public communion the people are exhorted to scrutinize their conscience and if they cannot quiet it, to go to some priest in order that through the ministry of God's holy words they may receive the benefits of absolution. (Communion.) Our American Episcopalians continue the use of the English formula of ordination; but they are silent on all other practices regarding confession, with the exception of the High Church Episcopalians, who generally fol-

low the English ritual, and in their catechism call confession a sacramental rite.

All other Protestants in the United States fail to mention confession or the power of absolution given by the priest, except possibly the Shakers or followers of Anna Lee who claim that the power of forgiving sins was given to the Saints of the latter day.

To come to the actual proof that the priest by his ordination has the power of forgiving sins, we appeal:

1st. To the words of Christ when He instituted the Sacrament. He promised to the head of the Church, in the name of Peter, the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that is to open heaven to those who by sin might be excluded from it. (Matt. xvi. 19). Christ also promised and gave the same power to all the Apostles: "Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 18). This might be explained as a simple promise, but even in that case the power of absolving from sin given to His Apostles, is not less evident, when we consider that the promise was fulfilled by Christ, when, after His resurrection, He found them together and after showing them His wounds, said: "Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you." When He had said this, He breathed on them; and He said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained." (John xx. 19-23). The showing of the wounds, the mentioning that He had been sent by the Father and the sending of His Apostles in like manner, the breathing on them, the giving of the Holy Ghost, all combines to prove that the risen Saviour was giving them a power not human but divine. He moreover gives them a judicial power to forgive or to retain the sins.

2ndly. Tradition also proves that the Church at all times claimed for her priests the power of forgiving sin.

St. Cyprian, with thirty-eight other bishops, giving an account to Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, of the decisions of their councils, notified him that they had agreed that those who had fallen and had been guilty of unlawful and criminal sacrifices, should do a long penance, but that in case of danger of death, they should be received back into the Church.

St. John Chrysostom, speaking of the priesthood, extols the priest's power, which was not given to angels or archangels . . . "for to them was not said: Whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained. What greater power," continues the holy Doctor, "can there be given. The Father has given all power to the Son, and the Son of God passed this power to the priests."

St. Jerome in one of his letters warns others to honor priests, when he says of himself: "Far be it from me to speak ill of those who hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven and in some manner sit in judgment before the day of judgment."

3rdly. All the other Fathers of the Church follow in the same strain, but in order to avoid long and tedious citations, we may safely state that nothing can give us a more lasting knowledge of the Church's teaching on the subject, than the history of the heresies that either denied the power of the keys or restricted it.

About the end of the second century the Montanists, so called after their leader Montanus, taught that some of the greatest crimes like murder, fornication and adultery were unpardonable sins; and even the austere Tertullian upbraids the Pope Zepherinus for his decree by which he invited all sinners to a sincere repentance and promised them pardon.

In the third century Novatian, a Roman priest and Novatus, a priest from Carthage in Africa, formed together a schism in the Church and out of hatred for the legitimate Pontiff Cornelius, reproached him for having received back into the Church those that had been guilty of idolatry and had repented.

St. Ambrose in his book on penance refutes in a masterly manner the errors of the Novatians and in a vigorous and eloquent passage shows the inconsistency of the heretics, who, whilst denying to a man the power of forgiving sin, baptize and claim the forgiveness of sins by their Baptism.

4thly. The sameness of belief existing between the Oriental schismatic churches of different rites and the Catholic Church is also a strong proof in favor of the Apostolic tradition concerning the Sacrament of Penance and the power given by Christ of forgiving sins in His name. The form used by the Greek schismatics to absolve penitents in the tribunal of Penance shows that they give to the words used by our Saviour when He instituted the Sacrament the same meaning that all Catholics do.

5thly. The argument of prescription. It is well-known that at all times and in all parts of the world, where there is a Catholic church, Catholic priests hear confession and claim the power of forgiving the sins of those who are truly penitent. If this doctrine and practice were not handed down by the Apostles, at what time and by whom was this practice first introduced? No sane man can ever be persuaded that a practice so contrary to our innate pride and otherwise so burdensome, could have been introduced since the Apostolic times, or that the author should have remained unknown, especially, when we consider that the power of the keys is held to be not from man, but from God.

Let it be noted that the power given by Christ of forgiving sins, is restricted neither as to the enormity of the sin, nor as to their number. No exception is made in the words used by the Saviour, when He bestowed the power of absolving; and to Peter, who asked if he should forgive seven times, Our Lord replied: "I say, not seven times, but seventy times seven." (Mat. xviii. 18). Nevertheless, as an ordained priest needs jurisdiction to hear confessions and to absolve validly, the Ordinary may withhold the power of absolving from certain sins, and those are then called reserved sins. (See No. 208).

190. How do the priests of the Church exercise the power of forgiving sins?

The priests of the Church exercise the power of forgiving sins by hearing the confession of sins and granting pardon for them as ministers of God and in His name.

We have already sufficiently explained that the priest has received the power to forgive sins from Christ; hence the priest absolves in the name of Christ and by the authority of Christ, and as a minister of God and of His Church. Hearing confessions and absolving sinners belongs to the ministry of the priest, as we shall see in the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

The acts of the penitent, to-wit, contrition, confession and satisfaction constitute, as we stated before, the matter of the Sacrament of Penance; and as these are required by divine institution, confession forms a necessary part of Penance and the priest cannot absolve the penitent who refuses to confess if he is able; but if he is unable to speak, his demeanor or sign may take the place of confession. The necessity of confession forms the subject of No. 208.

191. What must we do to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily?

To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily we must do five things:

1. We must examine our conscience.
2. We must have sorrow for our sins.

3. We must make a firm resolution never more to offend God.

4. We must confess our sins to the priest.

5. We must accept the penance which the priest gives us.

Since the acts of the penitent, contrition, confession and satisfaction, together with the absolution of the priest, constitute the outward sign of the Sacrament, the acceptance of the penance is supposed, because it is contained in "satisfaction," one of the penitent's acts. The first condition named above, viz., the examination of conscience, is necessary, for without it, the confession might not be entire and comprise all mortal sins; and the firm resolution never more to offend God, although implicitly contained in the sorrow for sins, should in practice be made explicit by adverting to the offense against God, as the cause of our sorrow, by detesting it sincerely and by resolving never more to offend God by it. Hence, it is well that the catechism should have specified five things for the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

192. What is the examination of conscience?

The examination of conscience is an earnest effort to recall to mind all the sins we have committed since our last worthy confession.

The integrity of the confession demands an examination of the state of our soul with respect to sin in thought, word or deed, contrary to the will of God. Confession is, as it were, the standard, which must guide the examination of conscience; for the latter regards the sins we are obliged or desire to confess. Now what sins are we obliged to confess? Only mortal sins with their number and such circumstances that change the species of sin, or make of one sinful act two or more sins. If a penitent has no mortal sin to confess and wishes to receive the Sacrament, he either may confess some mortal sin previously confessed and for-

given, or he may examine himself on lesser sins he may wish to confess.

In general, the examination of conscience preceding the confession, is obligatory under pain of mortal sin; but those that confess frequently and even those who rarely commit a mortal sin may be morally certain that they have not committed a mortal sin since their last worthy confession, if they have no recollection of any, and they may easily be excused from a rigid examination.

The only quality of a good examination of conscience is that it should be diligent or careful, and by this must be understood the usual care that is displayed in business matters of importance; for the Council of Trent teaches "that it is necessary for penitents to enumerate in confession all mortal sins of which they are conscious after a diligent examination."

193. How can we make a good examination of conscience?

We can make a good examination of conscience by calling to memory the commandments of God, the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the duties of our state of life.

Those who but seldom go to confession, say once or twice a year, and besides lead a careless Christian life, should be advised to use the form of examination here given, or a similar one. Others, who generally comply with all their Christian obligations and the duties of their state of life, may use a shorter form of examination, as for instance, simply to bear in mind their obligations toward God, toward themselves and toward their neighbor.

No other general rule can be prescribed than the one given in the preceding number: viz., that penitents must use the same diligence in the examination of their conscience that they commonly employ in their ordinary business affairs.

194. What should we do before beginning the examination of conscience?

Before beginning the examination of conscience, we should pray to God to give us light to know our sins and grace to detest them.

If penitents approach the Sacrament of Penance with the proper intention to obtain its salutary effects, and if they consider besides that this great gift of God, due to the merits of Jesus Christ, depends greatly on their dispositions, they will not fail to dispose themselves in a proper manner by prayer as indicated in the catechism; and if their occupations allow it, by a short meditation on sin as an offence against God, our Creator, our Preserver and our Redeemer, or on the awful consequences of mortal sin, such as the loss of grace, of the friendship of God and of the joys of heaven, or on the sufferings of the damned souls and the uncertainty of life; and still better, let such pious souls meditate a few moments on the passion and death of the Saviour on the cross, Who died to save us from sin and hell; let them elevate their thoughts toward the eternal Father, Who has demanded such a sacrifice from His Son; let them adore God's infinite holiness and justice as well as His infinite goodness and then, in all humility of heart, supplicate Him for light to know their sins and for grace to detest them.

LESSON THE EIGHEENTH

ON CONTRITION

195. What is contrition or sorrow for sin?

Contrition or sorrow for sin is a hatred of sin and a true grief of the soul for having offended God, with a firm purpose of sinning no more.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 14, ch. 4) has the following: "Contrition is a grief of the soul and is a detestation of the sin committed with the purpose of sinning no more."

This definition of contrition given by the Council of Trent and the catechism applies to all contrition in general, whether perfect or imperfect, but excludes purely sensible sorrow, exterior sorrow and natural sorrow. A purely sensible sorrow, manifested by tears or sighs, is not a sorrow of the soul; merely exterior sorrow is not real; and a natural sorrow or sorrow from a natural motive only, is not contrition in the sense of the definition.

In the citation of the Council of Trent, the word "sin", taken in its natural sense, means a transgression against the law of God, or, as the catechism defines it, it is a thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to the law of God.

Contrition in general is composed of three parts: the sorrow for the sin committed, the detestation of the sin, and the purpose of sinning no more. The sorrow for sin previously committed and the detestation of the sin may be theoretically distinguished, but in practice such distinction is useless, because he that grieves over a sin will also detest it and vice versa.

The third part of contrition, viz., the purpose of sinning no more, flows from the other two parts, and although it does not belong to the essence of contrition, it is nevertheless necessary, at least implicitly.

196. What kind of sorrow should we have for our sins?

The sorrow we should have for our sins should be interior, supernatural, universal and sovereign.

The catechism evidently does not intend to comprise in this answer the sins that have been forgotten in a previous worthy confession, for they are already forgiven, although they must by divine institution be confessed; but the answer refers to the sins that we have to confess because they are still unforgiven.

197. What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be interior?

When I say that our sorrow should be interior, I mean that it should come from the heart, and not merely from the lips.

Here the word "interior" used of contrition, means that it is not necessary that contrition should be accompanied by exterior manifestations, such as the wringing of the hands, weeping, lamenting, sighing, exclamations of grief; these may be useful concomitants of interior sorrow, but they are not requisite. What sorrow and contrition should be, above all else, is sincere, unfeigned and felt in the heart or lower part of the soul, the seat of the passion: in that part where sorrow and joy, hatred and love, sadness and delight, fear and hope, etc., are felt.

Two things are required to excite sorrow in our soul: evil and the knowledge or apprehension of it; this knowledge of past, present or future evil in the intellect excites the will to detest the evil. This detestation is in the will, but the sorrow is in the appetitive or lower part of the soul, and is, as it were, caused by the will through the knowledge of the evil. Sorrow is in the inferior or appetitive part of the soul, and is caused by contrition; therefore sorrow is not strictly speaking contrition but is caused by it; and therefore it is called sorrow. Contrition is complete with the detestation of sin by the will. In the logical order we have: past, present or future evil; fear or apprehension of the evil in the intellect; the will that detests or hates evil; and finally sorrow as a product of the two first operations of the soul, i. e., of the intellect and will.

Sorrow is an act of the will; but sorrow is not penance, says St. Augustine, but a concomitant of penance.

We find this true, sincere sorrow, often expressed as compunction of the heart or heartfelt sorrow, not because the fleshly part of the heart has a share in the sincere sorrow for sin, but because all sensible pains affect it. Likewise in a figurative manner of speaking, sincere sorrow for sin, when very deep, is also felt in the very heart of the soul, the seat of the strongest affections and passions, and even great sorrow for sin often affects the sensitive parts of the body and causes pain in the organic heart of the human body. (Cf. **Manual of Perfection**—"Passions of the Soul").

From this we understand, why the sorrow that comes from the lips only, by reciting an act of contrition or by reading long prayers in any book without interior sorrow or feeling in the heart, as explained above, is not a sorrow that can dispose us for the pardon of sin.

198. What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be supernatural?

When I say that our sorrow should be supernatural, I mean that it should be prompted by the grace of God and excited by motives which spring from faith, and not merely by natural motives.

Sorrow for sins must be supernatural in two ways:

1. Light must come from God to understand the evil the sinner has committed and divine help is necessary to detest it. This grace never fails the well-disposed penitent, especially if he has implored God's help.

2. The motive for detesting sin must also be supernatural, that is, the motive must be known to us by revelation, or as the catechism has it, it must spring from faith. Natural motives such as the loss of reputation, of health, of fortune, etc., are not motives that can properly dispose the penitent to receive a valid absolution.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 14) teaches us what motives are sufficient for a true contrition: the sorrow that comes from the loss of heaven sustained by sin, or that is born of fear of the pains of hell, or that comes from a consideration of the heinousness of sin, as for instance, the consideration of how detestable it is to offend our Creator and Preserver, and also the conviction of the turpitude in sins of injustice to our neighbor, in sins of impurity, of blasphemy, etc., committed in the sight or hearing of God.

The motive for contrition is sufficient even when it springs from the fear of temporal calamities inflicted by God as punishment for sin, especially, if they are of such a nature as wars, pestilences, earthquakes and such like, by which the Jewish people were often recalled from idolatry and other heinous crimes against the law of God, proclaimed by Moses.

Although the foregoing motives are sufficient for the remission of sin with the Sacrament of Penance, all sincere Christians, who, with faith in God's word and hope in His mercy, approach this Sacrament of reconciliation, will not fail to excite in themselves a more perfect sorrow and detestation of sin

by all those considerations or motives, which have their source in charity or in the love of God above all things, and thus they aim to make their contrition perfect.

199. What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be universal?

When I say that our sorrow should be universal, I mean that we should be sorry for all our mortal sins without exception.

In this and in the four next numbers there is question of the quality of a good contrition, as a disposition requisite for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance; and, therefore, these qualities refer only to contrition for the sins we are obliged to confess, viz., our mortal sins.

When we say universal sorrow, we mean that it should extend to all mortal sins without exception, even, if at the moment we do not recollect every mortal sin, or if it be impossible for us to determine the number or the species of our sins. Since no sin can be forgiven unless it be confessed or inadvertently omitted, it is a good practice to end our confession by saying: "I accuse myself also of all the sins of my whole life," or similar words.

Penitents should not rack their brain by trying to have before their mind or to remember every sin in particular, when they make an act of contrition; for it is sufficient that their sorrow should comprise in a general manner all mortal sins, without excepting any.

The reasons why our sorrow should be universal, are:

1. Because otherwise there is no contrition possible; for every mortal sin offends God, our Creator, Preserver and Redeemer; and by every one we forfeit Heaven and deserve hell.

2. Sanctifying grace cannot be bestowed on the soul as long as one mortal sin remains unforgiven, and God never forgives mortal sin without the infusion of grace, which makes our soul holy and pleasing to God. Mortal sin and sanctifying grace cannot dwell together in the same soul.

3. God's works are perfect, and in those by which He shows mercy, His mercy is complete in all things necessary to receive

the sinner again into His friendship. The sinner cannot be an enemy of God and a friend of God at the same time.

Hence one mortal sin cannot be forgiven without another, and, therefore, sorrow and contrition should extend to all mortal sins or should be universal. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 86, a. 3).

200. What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be sovereign?

When I say that our sorrow should be sovereign, I mean that we should grieve more for having offended God than for any other evil that can befall us.

Sovereign means supreme, above all; and when we say sovereign sorrow, we mean a sorrow for sin greater than for all other temporal evils that exist in the world or that can befall us.

Such considerations like the eternity of the pains of hell, the eternal separation from God, our Supreme Good, for which nothing else can be substituted to satisfy the cravings of the soul for a lasting happiness, the last judgment with the curse of God on the wicked, and the passion and death of Our Lord to satisfy for mortal sin, etc., are very apt to inspire any penitent, unless he be a hardened sinner, with the supreme detestation of sin that has brought so much misery into this world and endless sufferings in the next. The same considerations will generally suffice to make our contrition sincere and supernatural; and as for universal sorrow, it can be obtained by the further persuasive truth that but one mortal sin unforgiven at the moment of death, would precipitate the impenitent sinner into the everlasting abyss of untold and unconceivable woe and misery.

Are these four qualities also necessary when the penitent has no mortal sins to confess? As can be easily understood, even in the absence of a mortal sin, contrition must be: 1st, interior and not come from the lips only, for exterior contrition alone is equivalent to a lie; 2nd, it must be supernatural, as to its origin, for all grace comes from God and no contrition can be begun, continued or concluded, except by God's help and grace. It must be also supernatural as to the motive. Venial sin offends God; it deprives the sinner of more abundant graces,

and of special graces; it condemns the sinner to the pains of purgatory; it leads to the danger of falling into mortal sin; it lessens the supernatural life or sanctifying grace in the soul; it often draws upon the sinner temporal punishments from a just God; and finally, it is a matter of faith that no one can enter heaven until the last venial sin is washed away and full satisfaction is made for it. Hence, these and similar motives are supernatural and sufficient for contrition in the absence of mortal sin. 3rd, Contrition for venial sin must also be sovereign or supreme, for after mortal sin, wilful venial sin is the greatest evil in the world.

For people who are not conscious of a mortal sin and go frequently to confession, the opinion of St. Thomas may safely be followed in practice. It teaches that a virtual contrition, consisting in a desire of receiving the graces and benefits of the Sacrament, is sufficient, provided that the penitent in general confess his venial sins or some venial sin which he wishes to confess as an obstacle to a closer union with God, or to advancement in spiritual life. This latter proviso is necessary to guard the Sacrament against the danger of nullity. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 87, a. 1. to 1).

4th, contrition or sorrow for venial sins need not be universal for one venial sin can be forgiven without another. It is advisable nevertheless to confess only the venial sins one can and does detest, and to confess besides for greater security some mortal sin previously confessed.

201. Why should we be sorry for our sins?

We should be sorry for our sins, because sin is the greatest of evils and an offense against God, our Creator, Preserver and Redeemer and because sin shuts us out of Heaven and condemns us to the eternal pains of hell.

It is evident that there is here question of mortal sin only, and that not all the reasons are given why we should detest mortal sin.

In the preceding number we have explained that the motive for our sorrow or detestation of sin, should be supernatural, and in what a supernatural motive consists. The motive for sorrow for sin is supernatural whenever it is known to us through faith or revelation. It must be admitted that God can be known to us as our Creator and our Preserver by our reason only;

but God is much better understood by us after He has revealed Himself to us as Creator and Preserver, especially so, when we have become aware by revelation that He created and preserves all things made for His own glory, but also deigned to make man a participator in His happiness. The belief in God as our Creator and our Preserver is not essentially supernatural, but if we add to those two titles the title of Father, known to us through revelation, such a belief is undoubtedly supernatural. The God we adore is not the God of deists or rationalists, but the God of Christians. The Redemption is a purely supernatural truth, and the motive that prompts us to detest our sins for the sake of God, as our Redeemer, is a very pious and worthy motive.

The fear of hell and of the loss of heaven by mortal sin is also supernatural and a sufficient motive for detesting all our mortal sins. The turpitude and heinousness of sin is also given as a proper motive, for God has a right to our services, and to refuse Him those services is a heinous and detestable offense and a black ingratitude against the God Who created us, preserves our lives and made all things for our use and enjoyment.

But the pious penitent should not stop here; like the eagle that soars in the high heavens and is said to train its young to look steadfastly into the brightest rays of the sun, he dares to raise his sight and his thoughts to the highest heaven, in the presence of the Infinite Majesty, and there contemplates, as it were, the very essence of God to find therein other and more perfect motives for a deeper and greater detestation of sin; yea, he dares to study God's nature and finds in it the principal motives why God detests sin, and why we, likewise, should above all else detest and abhor it. Heretofore we have considered contrition only as a necessary adjunct for the remission of sin in the Sacrament of Penance; we will now try to understand that contrition which alone is sufficient to procure forgiveness of sin by itself.

202. How many kinds of contrition are there?

There are two kinds of contrition, perfect contrition and imperfect contrition.

By this answer we learn that although there may

be many degrees of intensity in contrition, there are but two kinds of contrition that tend to our spiritual welfare. We have learned that contrition is a sorrow for sin or a detestation of sin, and, since any sin is an offense against God, all contrition must necessarily contain, at least implicitly, a detestation of all grievous offenses of thoughts, words, actions or omissions contrary to the will of God. All sin should be deplored, but if the sinner is sorry for it only because he has lost some temporal advantage by it, or is suffering some temporal inconvenience from it, such sorrow or detestation of sin is neither perfect nor imperfect contrition. It is a natural sorrow and sorrow should be supernatural.

He that does not believe in God's existence, or believing in it holds that God does not care whether our deeds be good or bad, or in one word, does not admit any guilt in sin above that of one's own temporal good or evil, cannot make an act of contrition. At most what he can do is to have a semblance of contrition, sometimes called natural contrition, but it should be called rather natural sorrow or grief.

What will be said in the next two numbers applies to contrition or sorrow for all sin, venial as well as mortal; for our contrition may be perfect or imperfect with regard to our venial as well as with respect to our mortal sins.

203. What is perfect contrition?

Perfect contrition is that which fills us with sorrow and hatred for sin, because it offends God Who is infinitely good in Himself and worthy of all our love.

This definition of perfect contrition is simple, short and clear, and should be accepted as the only true definition, as hatred for sin and grief or sorrow for sin are practically one and the same, since he that detests sin will also be sorry for it. We need not consider each separately: he who has the one, has the other.

Perfect and imperfect contritions are distinguished by and differ in their motive. The motive of a perfect contrition lies in the fact that God is infinitely good in Himself, and consequently worthy of all our love and the love of all creatures capable of loving.

What do we understand by "infinitely good"? The attribute that makes God worthy of all our love. God is infinitely perfect in all His divine attributes or perfections. God has all the perfections of His creatures and is infinitely perfect in all of them; but we have learned already that in God there are no separate perfections, but all the perfections in God are but one and this perfection is identical with His infinitely perfect nature or absolute and necessary existence, for according to St. Thomas, His nature is His existence. (St. Thos. P. I, q. 3, a. 4).

Let us observe that the catechism says "infinitely good in Himself," that is, essentially or by nature infinitely good. God cannot be otherwise than good, without limitation, if we understand by His goodness all the perfections or attributes of God united into one, goodness; therefore He is infinitely amiable or worthy of all our love and the love of all rational creatures in heaven or on earth. If there are some that do not love God, it is because they do not know what God is, or how amiable and lovable He is. Such a contrition or sorrow for sin as prompts us to detest sin, because sin is an offense against God, infinitely good in Himself and, therefore, infinitely amiable and lovable, is called perfect contrition, because the motive or the reason of our sorrow for and detestation of sin is God Himself. Therefore it is the most acceptable to God and likewise the most excellent and most meritorious of all kinds of sorrow for sin. God Himself detests sin because it affronts and outrages His infinitely perfect nature.

Still there may be on the part of the sinner many degrees of intensity in his detestation of sin, resulting from his lesser or greater love of the infinitely amiable God, or from the greater or lesser knowledge of the guilt he senses in his sin. On this score penitents need have no scruples, but the greater their love, the more complete their forgiveness will be. Let us remember the words of our Lord, when speaking of the penitent Mary Magdalen: "Many sins are forgiven her, because she has loved much." (Luke vii. 47). Therefore each one of us should strive to obtain by prayer and meditation the greatest and deepest sorrow not only for our own sins, but even for the sins of others; for they that love the infinitely good and amiable God for His own sake, will also detest whatever is detestable in His sight, viz., sin wherever it exists.

To the essence of a perfect contrition belong also three other qualities, implicitly contained in fully perfect contrition, or necessarily flowing from it:

1st. our love of God should be one of preference over all things created, not even excepting ourselves. This love of God has also three degrees. The first is necessarily contained in a perfect contrition, and it consists in this, that one would rather die than commit one mortal sin; the second consists in the disposition rather to die than commit a wilful venial sin, and the third degree belongs to those chosen souls who would rather lose all things, even life itself, than not follow the evangelical counsels, i. e., counsels that are recommended to us by Our Lord, but that are not rigorous precepts. These two last degrees are not necessary for a perfect contrition.

2ndly, our detestation of sin should be supreme (No. 201), and hence we should be more sorry for having offended God by sin, than for any other evil that may befall us.

3rdly, perfect contrition contains the resolution never more to offend God by mortal sin, or if one be guilty of mortal sin, to have recourse to the Sacrament of Penance as soon as practicable; because God imposes on us the obligation of confessing all our mortal sins, and he that is not disposed to obey Him promptly in this, cannot be said to have a perfect contrition of his grievous offenses against the infinitely lovable God, lovable beyond the comprehension of men and angels.

4thly, all contrition, even imperfect contrition, should be efficacious and include the disposition to avoid all the proximate occasions of sin, as will be explained in No. 207.

5thly, perfect as well as imperfect contrition includes also the disposition to avail oneself of all the practices considered necessary to enable one to persevere in the state of grace, such as prayer, confession and Holy Communion, especially if one's confessor has imposed these practices in a previous confession, or inculcated them as the only hope of abandoning one's sinful life.

Since some people might think that perfect contrition excludes necessarily all imperfect contrition, the following warning is considered opportune. Nothing prevents us from arriving at perfect contrition by an imperfect one, and from retaining both. Let us suppose that a sinner begins by detesting his mortal sins, because by them he has lost heaven; this contrition is imperfect, but it is sufficient for the remission of sin in the Sacrament of Penance. With that imperfect contrition still in his heart, he begins to consider what heaven is: it is a place where angels and saints see God as He is, or face to face, and the sight and enjoyment of God will make the inhabitants of heaven happy for all time to come. How beautiful God must be! He is all-wise, almighty, all-holy, yea, infinitely and incomprehensibly so, in all that is good; how amiable and lovable He must be! The majesty of all the kings of the world is vileness in comparison with the majesty of our heavenly King. What have I

done? I have sinned; I have preferred a moment of forbidden pleasure to His holy will; I have given way to my passions, and offended God, Who is so good and amiable. God hates sin; so will I. He detests sin, and so will I. Like the best of fathers, He offers me pardon, and I will be His child again. I am now fully determined never more to offend Him, to do penance and to amend my life.

The same perfect contrition may easily be obtained by thinking on how detestable sin is in itself, or on the dreadful and eternal pains of hell, where the infinitely just God punishes the wicked for all eternity. Another way to arrive at perfect contrition, is by the consideration of the passion of Our Lord, the only Son of the all-good, all-holy and all-just God, Who will leave no sin unpunished. But in all these considerations let us not forget prayer. God, always faithful to His promises, will give us grace to obtain a perfect contrition. Furthermore, since perfect contrition is more worthy of Him, He will assist us in our sincere disposition of pleasing Him, if we ask in all humility for so great a gift.

What is the effect of perfect contrition? Since charity and mortal sin, as we said before, cannot exist together in the soul, if the sinner, no matter how guilty, can make an act of perfect contrition, he is in one instant freed from the guilt of all mortal sins, and from the eternal punishment due to them. Sanctifying grace or the supernatural life of the soul is again restored, and he is now capable of meriting for heaven, and of increasing the supernatural life within him; moreover, all the merits of his virtuous actions performed before he fell into mortal sin, are restored to him.

Practical conclusions. 1. Perfect contrition contains an act of the perfect love of God, and it is this act together with the detestation of sin for His sake that constitutes the essence of a perfect contrition. Contrition is also the source of our firm purpose of sinning no more, and of doing all things demanded by God, such as the confession of our mortal sins when the opportunity arrives, and the acceptance of whatever penance may be imposed.

The act of perfect love of God need not necessarily be expressed in words or evidenced by signs or in writing; it is sufficient that it be in affections only which spring from the intellect and will; the intellect apprehends without fully understanding God's infinite beauty and amiability; our will tends to what is good, and that inclination of the will towards good engenders love, or rather it is love itself; for we necessarily love an unalloyed good. We may fail in our appreciation of what is good;

and when we sin, we appreciate temporal goods more than God, Who by nature is infinitely good; for nothing can be added to make Him better or more amiable. Therefore the perfect love of God is essentially one of preference, or a love by which we prefer Him to anything else outside of God.

2. To increase our perfect love of God in intensity, so that much may be forgiven to much love, we should endeavor to obtain the love of complacency, which is an inward joy, susceptible of indefinite increase, on account of the infinite perfections attributable and belonging to God. The exercise of this complacent love of God will often lead holy and privileged souls to a high degree of contemplation and to intimate friendship and union with God, a privilege bestowed on the greatest saints. (Apoc. xix. 6, sq.). From an ardent love of complacency in God's infinite perfections, a greater degree of the love of preference inevitably results, and also the love of benevolence and the love of contrition.

3. By the love of benevolence we desire ardently all the good things God may desire for Himself, such as exterior glory, our own service and perfect subjection to His holy will and the homage of all rational beings. From this love of benevolence springs true zeal for God's honor and glory and for the salvation of souls. Hence also that heroic devotion we admire in the saints, who, unable to increase God's intrinsic glory, willingly would have laid down a thousand lives to procure Him a greater exterior glory from His creatures. (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 28, a. 4). Of this zeal we may see countless examples in Holy Writ: in the sentiments of the Royal Prophet, v. g., Ps. lxviii; of St. Paul (2 Cor. xi. 29); and in the lives of the saints.

4. Lastly, from the love of complacency flows the love of contrition, by which we grieve not only over our sins, but over all the sins that are committed and have been committed from the beginning of creation. This love of contrition should follow us to the grave. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 84, a. 8). David had constantly his sin before his eyes (Ps. l.) and St. Peter is said to have wept so much over his sin of denying Our Lord during the greater part of his life, that his tears had furrowed a visible channel in his cheeks. What selfimposed mortification many saints offered to God for the sins of heretics, infidels and bad Christians, as a reparation for the insults offered to the Divine Majesty (cf. **Manual of Perfection**—Acts of the Love of God).

204. What is imperfect contrition?

Imperfect contrition is that by which we hate what offends God, because by it we lose heaven and deserve hell; or because sin is so hateful in itself.

Imperfect contrition, also called attrition, is as its name implies, less perfect and less meritorious than perfect contrition. Imperfect contrition must, like perfect contrition, be **sincere** or interior, **universal,** that is, extending to all mortal sins; **supreme,** or exceeding in appreciation the sorrow for all other evils; **supernatural,** or springing from faith, that is, the motive must be known to us through revelation, for a purely natural motive is insufficient. We must add also **efficacious,** because it must include implicitly the purpose not to commit mortal sin any more and the disposition or willingness to accept the penance to be enjoined by the confessor.

The difference between perfect contrition and attrition is not of intensity, for a murderer may grieve to the verge of insanity for his horrible and nefarious deed and have no contrition at all. Such would be the case with one that did not believe in the existence of God, or did not admit any supernatural revelation, or if believing in revelation, had no other motive for his sorrow than a natural one, viz., the loss of freedom, the certainty of a death-penalty, or the degradation and shame caused by his heinous crime to himself and family, etc.

The difference between the two contritions can be found only in the difference of the motive natural or supernatural we can have for our sorrow or detestation of sin. There are many supernatural motives one can have for his sorrow for sin, but there is only one motive that can make contrition perfect, and that is a motive or reason that springs from charity or the love of God above all things for His own sake. Other supernatural reasons that one may have for his sorrow for sin are good, if they conform to the truth, but none can make a contrition perfect except the love of an infinitely amiable God, Who is infinite in all His perfections and is therefore infinitely good in Himself and worthy of all our love.

There are many supernatural motives for our sorrow which would make our attrition real and acceptable to God; and, as we shall see in the next number, they are sufficient for the forgiveness of mortal sin in the Sacrament of Penance. The Council of Trent names only three: the heinousness of mortal sin, the loss of heaven, and the pains of hell merited by the sinner.

1. Why is mortal sin detestable or heinous? Because mortal sin is an offense against God, our Creator, our Preserver

and our Redeemer. It is, therefore, black ingratitude to offend Him by preferring our will to His, a creature to the Creator. It is an abominable disorder and baseness from the point of view that God has created this world for His own glory, but also from the consideration that man might rule as king, provided he be subject to Him from Whom he holds all he is and all he possesses. If we detest mortal sin not because God is good by nature and worthy of all our love, but simply because He is good to us and we owe Him many a debt of gratitude, that contrition is selfish and, therefore, imperfect.

2. The loss of heaven is another supernatural motive for imperfect contrition. We are taught by revelation from God that one mortal sin forfeits heaven, and if we detest sin solely because we shall be deprived of eternal happiness, in case the sin remains unforgiven at our death, the contrition is again imperfect.

3. The everlasting pains of hell are perhaps more powerful to instill into the soul a true sorrow for mortal sin. Most sinners are more easily moved to contrition by the fear of pain than of the loss of a great reward; the pains of hell are better understood than the joys of heaven, but here there is danger that might make our sorrow for sin worthless and even sinful. The dread of the fire of hell might so absorb the thought of sinners, that God, Who in His justice created hell, is forgotten; detestation of sin itself is not considered, and there is no purpose of amendment. What is worse, the sinner may retain such an affection for his sins and their wicked degrading pleasures, that were it not for the fire of hell, he would continue to sin. The last-named wicked sentiments cannot be regarded as proper and useful for disposing the sinner to receive the benefits of sacramental absolution. The fear of a sacrilegious confession is certainly well founded, when there is question of those who live in the proximate occasion of sin, or who have often confessed the same mortal sins without any amendment; these are properly called the recidivists or habitual sinners. The confessor may take the chance of absolving such sinners, when they are in danger of death, but may the sinners themselves take such a chance?

4. There are many other motives that may sufficiently dispose the penitent for a valid absolution, such as the loss of the supernatural life of the soul, or sanctifying grace; the loss of all merits due to good deeds he has ever performed, etc.; but the consideration of the sufferings of Christ, the Saviour, is more than any other motive the inestimable source of a true and valid sorrow. He that is guilty of mortal sin has denied our Lord like Peter, betrayed Him like Judas, cruelly whipped Him at the pillar, crowned Him with thorns, condemned Him to death, crucified Him, adding insults to mockery; for it is mortal

sin that caused the Saviour freely and meekly to undergo all those sufferings, and made Him shed the last drop of His blood for the salvation of sinners: He died that we might live.

5. As for venial sin, little is required for a true sorrow, as for instance, a simple affection of love towards God, a desire to do better, or a desire to obtain greater reward from the just Judge, provided venial sin be regarded as an obstacle to greater affection for God, to our spiritual advancement or to greater merit. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 87, a. 1, 3). The catechism hardly mentions the necessary disposition for those that have no mortal sin to deplore, but as venial sin is after mortal sin the greatest evil, pious souls are reminded that the better their disposition, the surer they are of obtaining a full remission of all their venial sins and the punishment due to them. The following are good motives for true sorrow: the pains of purgatory, the lessening of sanctifying grace or supernatural life, the danger of falling into mortal sin when venial sins are easily committed without remorse of conscience, the offense of the sinner against a loving Father, Who has given him all he has and without any merit of his, the goodness of God, Who has destined him to eternal happiness, and hence the double ingratitude of the sinner, the holiness of God, Who will not allow anything defiled to enter heaven, the necessity of doing penance for the slightest offense, the loss of many graces as the result of venial sin, and finally God's infinite perfections that make Him, Who is offended by sin, worthy of all the united love of men and angels. The last motive, God's infinite perfections, His justice, holiness, and goodness, constitutes a perfect contrition.

205. Is imperfect contrition sufficient for a worthy confession?

Imperfect contrition is sufficient for a worthy confession, but we should endeavor to have a perfect contrition.

Two things are taught in this answer: imperfect contrition is sufficient, and yet we should endeavor to have a perfect contrition. These two truths need a separate explanation.

1. From the Council of Trent (Sess. 14 on Penance, 4), speaking of attrition or imperfect contrition, we learn that "although it (attrition) cannot by itself without the Sacrament of Penance lead the sinner to justification, nevertheless it disposes him to obtain the grace of God in the Sacrament." The word "disposes"

in this passage, if it means anything, can mean nothing else than that attrition disposes him properly, sufficiently or efficaciously to receive the grace of God in the Sacrament; hence imperfect contrition is sufficient to forgive mortal sin in the Sacrament of Penance, for grace and mortal sin cannot exist together in the soul. If we consider the nature of imperfect contrition in itself, it is indeed agreeable and pleasing to God, for, as the Tridentine Council remarks, the fear of God's punishments disposed the Ninevites to obtain mercy, and rightly, because "the fear of God is the beginning of His love." (Eccli. xxv. 16).

The sinner who has only attrition for his sins at least implicitly resolves to avoid mortal sin, and this itself is a proof of love for "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me." (John xvi. 25).

2. Attrition based on the fear of God is very useful, for it is a gift of God; it is inspired by the Holy Ghost and, therefore, by corresponding to that grace we may safely obtain further graces from God, such as the regret of the loss of heaven, which includes the desire of heaven and hope in God's promises. This again leads to the love of God Who is good to us, for as St. Thomas remarks: "From the fact that we hope some good may come to us from him in whom we hope, we are thereby inclined towards him as our good."

3. Perfect contrition, for which the love of God above all things for His own sake is required, remits sin without the Sacrament of Penance; therefore, a beginning of love contained in any of the motives for attrition given in the preceding number is sufficient with the Sacrament of Penance, for to judge otherwise would be detracting from the efficacy of the Sacrament. This Sacrament with any contrition, based upon a supernatural motive, even that of fear of hell-fire, should be sufficient, because all supernatural motives are inspired by the Holy Ghost. The catechism adds that we should

endeavor to have a perfect contrition. This hardly needs explanation, for, since perfect contrition is far more acceptable to God and more efficacious in forgiving not only the eternal punishment due to sin, but also a greater part of the temporal punishment due to it, we owe it to ourselves to endeavor to obtain a perfect contrition by all the means at our disposal. In practice, no one should approach the tribunal of Penance, without reciting the act of contrition, weighing the meaning of every sentence, with sincere interior sentiments of detestation for sin and of an ardent love of God; yea, everyone ought to recite it daily in the sincerity of his heart, for no one can promise himself that the grace of the last Sacraments will be vouchsafed him at the hour of death. The habit of frequently reciting it will make it natural to say it when danger of death threatens or death is near.

206. What do you mean by a firm purpose of sinning no more?

By a firm purpose of sinning no more, I mean a fixed resolve not only to avoid all mortal sin, but also its near occasions.

The catechism teaches us that besides contrition we must have a firm resolve or determination of the will to avoid not only such mortal sins we have confessed, but also all mortal sins without excepting any. A half determination of the will, like a thought or a desire, is not sufficient, and therefore the catechism adds: a firm purpose or a fixed resolve, so that the penitent can truly say: I do will to shun mortal sin; I do will to flee all the near occasions of any and all mortal sins; and I will to do so at whatever cost or sacrifice of friendship, honor, worldly goods, yea, of life itself. This firm purpose excludes cowardice, e. g., the cowardice of one who would say: I would gladly avoid mortal sin, were it not for this or that circumstance, this or that attachment; but it does not exclude

fear or timidity based on our weakness and experience of the past; for this fear is often well grounded and may spring from a humble diffidence in our individual ability to resist all temptations. Such persons should be reminded that with the help and grace of God, the most insurmountable obstacles can be overcome; for although humility should teach us that "he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall." (Cor. x. 12). St. Paul in the next verse, whilst warning the Corinthians to resist temptations, adds: "God is faithful and will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able; but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it." Nothing is impossible to him who trusts in God. Therefore the true penitent can truthfully say: "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me." (Phil. iv. 13).

The purpose of sinning no more, besides being firm, should be efficacious or practical. To arm oneself against an enemy, so persistent and irreconcilable like Satan, is absoultely required for safety: prayer, mortification, good works and frequent reception of the Sacraments are the principal offensive and defensive weapons. Penitents should also ask the advice of their confessor and scrupulously follow his instructions. Finally, since we know by experience that there are circumstances which have been heretofore occasions of or incentives to sinning, our reason as well as our holy religion teaches us that these should be shunned. But is this possible? Can and must a man shun all the occasions of sin? The catechism answers the question by saying: he must avoid the near occasions of sin, for otherwise his resolutions could not be called sincere, efficacious, or firm.

207. What do you mean by the near occasions of sin?

By the near occasions of sin I mean all persons, places and things that may easily lead us into sin.

We distinguish two kinds of occasions of sin: the

remote or the proximate, called also near occasions. Remote occasions are those which, judging from their nature, may, indeed, but seldom really do, induce anyone to fall into mortal sin. There lurks, owing to our natural inclination to evil, danger in any lawful amusement and modest recreation, even in any of our ordinary conversations or usual occupations. God is not unreasonable, and therefore cannot will that we should shun these, unless, on account of peculiar circumstances, they may become proximate.

Proximate occasions are those which by their very nature usually or commonly induce people to fall into mortal sin, viz., the reading of irreligious or immodest books, the looking at lascivious pictures, the frequenting of theaters, where virtue is ridiculed and adultery and other vices are lauded and approved, or where nude pictures or immodest poses or actions, suggestive of immorality, are exhibited; also immodest dances, especially public dances where women of doubtful character or immoral lives are allowed to congregate; also lengthy and unguarded conversations with persons of a different sex who are not nearly related; also words or phrases of double meaning, or stories, looks and gestures conducive to evil thoughts and desires, etc.

It must be understood that even remote occasions of sin may, on account of a particular evil inclination in an individual person, become proximate occasions; and this happens when a sinner knows by his experience of the past that this or that place, this or that person, this or that particular thing, has often been the occasion of mortal sin for him; then, what is remote for others becomes proximate in his case.

From this we conclude that those that have been guilty of mortal sin, are obliged in conscience to shun all the proximate or near occasions of sin, which to them are such, even if to some others such occasions be only remote; and the reason is evident, for he that loves danger, shall perish therein, and he who is in the proximate occasion of sin, is in great danger of sinning. Hence the sinner who is not willing to shun and remove as far as he can the proximate occasions of sin, has no

sincere contrition and, therefore, canot be absolved. But what can be done if the occasion is absolutely unavoidable or at least morally so, i. e., it cannot be shunned without great inconvenience or loss? Such a one must clearly state his case to his confessor. If the confessor judges that the proximate occasion can be made remote by prayer, frequent reception of the Sacraments, by a salutary and adequate penance or mortification, or by other means which the confessor may suggest, let the penitent abide by his decision; if on the contrary the confessor judges that the case is such that the penitent must absolutely remove the occasion, or flee from it, let the latter remember that it is better to lose a finger or eyen a hand by amputation than lose his life; in the words of Christ: "If thy hand, or thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to go into life maimed or lame, than having two hands and feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. It is better for thee, having one eye, to enter into life, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." (Mat. xviii. 8, 9). If the Saviour spoke so about scandal, that does not inevitably lead us into sin, what would He have said about the proximate occasion of sin?

We must think differently about the necessity of shunning all the proximate occasions of venial sins, for that is practically impossible, and since we are not obliged to confess all our venial sins, we need not resolve to shun the proximate occasions of every venial sin; nevertheless he that confesses only venial sins must purpose and be prepared either to avoid the proximate occasion of one species of venial sins or to diminish the number of his venial sins; for otherwise he would place himself in danger of being deficient in his good resolution, because he would abandon the desire of advancing or of removing the impediments to spiritual progress, viz., venial sins. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 87, a. 1, to 1).

208. What is Confession?

Confession is the telling of our sins to a duly authorized priest, for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness.

The necessity of confessing one's sins to obtain forgiveness of them necessarily follows from the fact that the priests of the Church, as successors of the Apostles, have received the power to forgive or retain sin. The priest in the confessional, the tribunal or court of reconciliation, is the sole judge whether the penitent is to be absolved or not. Can the priest do it conscien-

tiously, if the penitent is not his own accuser and his own witness against or in favor of himself? Does it not necessarily follow, too, that if the penitent's case is to be understood by the judge, the sinner should confess all his mortal sins? Penance has also for object true amendment and restitution of one's neighbor's honor or property. One that has been wrongfully vilified, or had his property unjustly taken, should have his name or his goods restored; likewise, if damage to life or property has been criminally inflicted, reparation must be imposed upon the penitent; and how can this be determined without confession?

We are now speaking of secret confession, sometimes called auricular confession, and not of the public confession of sins, which was also resorted to by sinners in the beginning of the Church to obtain by greater humiliation a greater pardon of the temporal punishment due to their sins, or to excite a greater sorrow in their heart by a public avowal.

Wickliff was the first to denounce confession, and he was condemned in the Council of Constance. Luther in his book **The Captivity of Babylon** declared that "private confession as practiced pleased him." Afterwards he rejected it, but complained that people had become more wicked since its abolition. His followers, in the so-called Augsburg Confession, favored private confession. Calvin denied its divine institution, but admitted "that its use was of very ancient date," and advised the sorrowful "not to neglect the remedy proffered by Our Lord, viz., to have recourse to private confession for comfort's sake with one's pastor." In the Convocation of the Anglican clergy of 1536, we read that penance which Christ requireth consists of contrition, confession, of the amendment of one's former life and of an obedient submission to the laws and will of God. (Oxford Tracts No. 62).

The prescriptions of the Anglican ritual for the sick with respect to special confession have been quoted, but the American Episcopalian ritual is silent on that point.

The Methodists admit no private confession, but prescribe a kind of public confession for their Board Societies, and it is still practiced in a few places among the older members of their flock.

The Council of Trent has promulgated three decrees on the necessity, by divine command, of the sacramental confession as practiced by the Catholic Church (Sess. 18, Can. 6, 7, on Penance). The doctrine laid down in that Council is also the doc-

trine of the Fathers: St. Clement of Rome in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Ireneus, Tertullian, Origen, St. Cyprian, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nice, St. Ambrose, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and others, all writers of note from the first to the fifth century. The same doctrine is proved by the old sacramentaries or rituals, in both the Eastern and Western Churches, and by the Penitential Book of John, Patriarch of Constantinople, surnamed the Faster. The original of the Faster's book dates from the end of the sixth century and from a manuscript over five hundred years old John Morin, nearly three centuries ago, published the original Greek text and the Latin translation. In it, among other things, the priests are instructed in detail what questions to ask to arrive at the number and species of their penitent's sins.

We have also the Penitential Book of Egbert, who became Bishop of York about 731. The same Morin published a copy of the original manuscript, which was over six hundred years old. This book gives several formulas of confession.

Many other liturgies of a later date sustain the teaching of the Church handed down from the time of the Apostles, that sacramental confession or secret confession is necessary for the forgiveness of mortal sin; for many of those liturgies were copies of others of an earlier date, and the practice of one church was but the practice of a previous church, from which it sprang and to which it succeeded. This brings us to the argument of prescription. Everywhere among Catholics of every nation and tongue, we find the practice of auricular confession, without mention of its author or of the time it was introduced. If it were not instituted by Christ and practiced by the Apostles, history would record the name of the man who was successful in imposing this burden upon his adherents. In what church and by whom was it first introduced? Not a word in response; but on the contrary we find it practiced from the start in the Greek, Armenian, and Russian Churches, and among other sects separated from the true Church. It is true that wherever we find a schismatical or heretical church calling itself Christian, confession has become less frequent and why? Because no human authority can maintain it; it requires God's grace as well as divine institution; and when the practice has been once abandoned, it can but with great difficulty, if at all, be re-introduced. This we see exemplified in the efforts of the High Church Episcopalians to re-introduce confession: so far they have met with but little encouragement.

The priest who hears confessions must be duly authorized, says the catechism; for simple ordination confers the power only, but not the jurisdiction: he has to exercise his power over others, and if these are not

subject to his authority, he is not authorized to pronounce judgment on them; and if he does so, his absolution is invalid.

By Christ's institution there are in the Church two kinds of jurisdiction, taken in the restricted sense, of exercising the priestly functions: one, general and supreme, belonging to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, whose jurisdiction is unlimited as to place or person; and the other, a subordinate jurisdiction, i. e., one limited to place or persons, belonging to the bishops within their respective dioceses. The Pope can subdelegate his power to any person within the Church, who is capable of it, and likewise the bishop can subdelegate his jurisdiction to any one of his subjects that is capable of it, but only within the limits of his diocese. The Pope may except from the jurisdiction of any priest or bishop any place, person, act or sin, and the bishops also have the right to withhold some grave sins from the jurisdiction of their priests, but their power is subordinate to that of the Supreme Pontiff and to the general laws and dispositions of the Church. Hence the priests of one diocese cannot validly absolve in another diocese without the authorization of the bishop of the diocese wherein the priest hears confessions. But in danger of death, the Church like a good mother, supplies all defects of jurisdiction, so that a person in such danger may validly be absolved by any priest, not even excepting a schismatic or excommunicated priest.

The catechism finally adds "for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness," for if anyone tells his sins to a priest even in the confessional for the sake of advice, or consolation, or for any other purpose than that of receiving absolution, the absolution, even if the priest gives it, would be invalid; or, in other words, the penitent to be validly absolved must have an implicit hope and desire of receiving the forgiveness of sins.

209. What sins are we bound to confess?

We are bound to confess all our mortal sins, but it is well also to confess our venial sins.

As we shall state and explain when we come to the integrity of confession in No. 213, that we are bound to confess all our mortal sins, with their number and different species, we shall consider here only the last part of the answer, namely, that it is well also to confess all our venial sins.

One of the decrees of the Council of Trent is emphatic and clear on this subject; for we find therein: "If any one says that those who try to confess their sins do not leave anything to divine mercy to forgive, or finally, that it is not lawful to confess venial sins, let him be anathema."

From the decree of the holy Council we conclude that anyone who believes and says that it is wrong to try to confess all one's sins, venial and mortal, since in that case there is no more room for the mercy of God, is anathema, that is, he is a heretic and excluded from the Church. This portion of the decree is aimed at the heretics who taught that confession in use among Catholics is an excruciating torture, and that the Catholics who practice it, intend that their self-imposed affliction of conscience is to take the place of the goodness and mercy of God. We can easily avoid this alleged inhuman torture by examining our conscience as we should, with exactness, viz., as to the evil done and the good we have omitted to do; with severity, i. e., without excusing ourselves, but with calmness. We must not torture our conscience for fear of forgetting some sin; for a defect of memory cannot be imputed to us as sinful, and, moreover, we know that the sins we forget, without any fault of ours, are remitted as well as those we do confess.

It is well also to confess our venial sins. This teaching of the catechism agrees with the foregoing decree, for the decree condemns the theory of those who say that it is not lawful to confess our venial sins.

1. Is this doctrine not opposed to the teaching of St. Thomas who says that no Sacrament was especially instituted to forgive venial sins? (P. III, q. 65, a 1 to 8). The Angelic Doctor teaches that Christ instituted two Sacraments for the forgiveness of original and mortal sin; all other Sacraments, among other benefits, give an increase of sanctifying grace, which, partially at least and in proportion to one's charity, remits venial sin. Therefore no Sacrament was especially or principally instituted for the remission of venial sin; but Baptism forgives all sins and all punishment due to them, and Penance forgives all mortal and venial sins we confess with the proper disposition.

2. Venial sin is the greatest evil in the world after mortal sin, and condemns us to the awful fire of purgatory, if we die guilty of it. Do we not owe it to ourselves to blot out an evil that is greater than the loss of all that is most dear to us on earth, even than life itself? The excuse that venial sin can be forgiven without confession, although true, should in practice be rejected; for, generally speaking, those that do not confess their deliberate venial sins are precisely those that neglect the means by which venial sin can be remitted without confession, viz., good works done for God's sake, acts of the love of God or of contrition, the frequent reception of the Sacraments, the

sacramentals, which directly or indirectly remit venial sins by increasing sanctifying grace in our souls. Besides there is no absolute certainty that our charity and the good works we perform, are sufficient to blot out all venial sins; whilst if we confess all venial sins, these sins are certainly forgiven, if we confess them with the necessary disposition, that is, with a true sorrow and firm purpose to avoid them in the future or at least to diminish their number.

3. He who never confesses any venial sin, because it is only venial, and is not bound to confess it, is like a sick man that consults a physician about some lung or heart trouble which he considers dangerous, but hides from him a running sore that is in itself not mortal. There may be a connection between one disease and another, and one remedy may cure them both. Do those people who never confess any venial sin, forget that the priest is the physician of our souls as well as our judge, and that as such he must strive to cure all the ailments of the soul, even if they are not all mortal? As a confessor, the priest receives special light from above and he can warn the penitent of the danger he is in of falling into mortal sin by acquiring the habit of sinning venially without remorse. He will also direct the penitent how to make progress in the spiritual life, i. e., to tend towards perfection, and will indicate to him the means to strive towards it, admonishing him before all that Christ desires the perfection of all Christians in whatever state they are placed, when He says: "Be ye therefore perfect as also your heavenly Father is perfect." (Mat. v. 48).

4. In general, penitents who seriously doubt whether any of their sins are mortal or venial should confess them as they appear to them, adding, for the sake of making their confession clear, that they think that their consent was not full, or that their act or omission was unavoidable, etc.; for all circumstances either notably aggravating the sin or diminishing its guilt should be declared; especially so, if by such circumstances a venial sin may become mortal or vice versa.

210. Which are the chief qualities of a good confession?

The chief qualities of a good confession are three: it must be humble, sincere and entire.

The catechism speaks here of the chief qualities, for St. Thomas (Supp. q. 9, a. 4) enumerates sixteen qualities, among which humility, sincerity and entirety or integrity are the principal ones. Among the sixteen enumerated by the Angelic Doctor some are necessary and some are to be recommended only: all belong to Penance as a Sacrament at least remotely, but some regard principally penance as a virtue, and others penance

as an integral part of the Sacrament. The following belong to the Sacrament of Penance: it must be "discreet," or made with sound judgment in distinguishing between grievous and venial sins and bare imperfections; and therefore it is useful to begin the confession with the graver sins, as these should be uppermost in our mind; it must be "voluntary," i. e., free from all compulsion; it must be "pure," or accompanied with the right intention, and not with the intention of pleasing parents or superiors, or of gaining the good will of the confessor, etc.; it must be "firm," so that the shame of confessing the sins committed may not cause the penitent to swerve from the truth.

The following qualities belong principally to the acts of the virtue of penance: it must be "modest," or accompanied with a certain shame of the guilt contracted by the sinner, who therefore renounces vainglory in the advantage he may have gained by a sinful act; it must be "sorrowful" or proceed from internal sorrow; it should be "humble" or proceed from the consciousness of one's infirmity and misery and one's dependence on God.

Among the qualities of a good confession given by St. Thomas, four regard the act of confessing, which is a manifestation of the infirmity of the soul, and as such, it must be "sincere" or conformable to the facts; it must be "open," that is, clear and frank without hiding thoughts under equivocations or ambiguities of expression; it must be "simple," that is, the penitent should avoid all circumstances that are foreign to the guilt to be manifested; it must be "entire," that is, the sinner must omit nothing that should be manifested.

When we consider the judge of the tribunal, to whom the manifestation of our conscience is to be made with a view to forgiveness, the confession must be "self-accusatory," or incriminating no one else but the penitent himself, for in the tribunal of Penance the sinner is his own accuser and only witness: this quality eliminates simple conversation or relation of one's sins for the sake of advice, instruction, etc.; it should be "attentive" or respectful, for the sinner should be ready to accept what the priest may enjoin or advise, and to put it into practice; finally, it should be "secret," but the secrecy regards the tribunal itself, for in it there is question of the hidden things of the conscience, and the secrecy binds the priest absolutely, so that nothing of what is said or done can be revealed by him. It is well also that confession be "timely," that is, one should resort to it as soon as one has fallen into mortal sin and there is an opportunity to confess; and likewise it is advisable

that it should be "frequent," for frequent confession together with frequent and devout communions will not only overcome the most stubborn passions and evil habits, but lead a sinner from a life of shame and sin to holiness and perfection.

211. When is our confession humble?

Our confession is humble, when we accuse ourselves of our sins with a deep sense of shame and sorrow for having offended God.

In the preceding number we learned that our confession should be humble, because it denotes a consciousness of the sinner's infirmities and miseries and of his dependence on God for forgiveness. The sinner should feel like the prodigal son, who upon his return to his father, said: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee: I am not worthy to be called thy son." (Luke, xv. 18, 19).

The following considerations will help the penitent to confess with a truly humble heart: 1, once he was a child of God, and by mortal sin he has become a vile slave of the devil; 2, he was called to enjoy all the delights of heaven in company with the angels and saints, yea, in company with the infinitely amiable God, and he has preferred the company of the damned and of the abominable demons, whose torments he must share and among whom his place is prepared; 3, the sinner has violated his most sacred promises made in Baptism, and renewed at his first Communion and at his Confirmation: he is a traitor; 4, he is an ungrateful wretch, for Jesus Christ died for him and showered him with His graces and love, he has turned all the gifts of intelligence and will, and the endowments of his nature against his Benefactor; 5, the sinner is a deicide, for he contributed to the death of the Saviour, and he is even more culpable than those who crucified Him, because the Jews would not have crucified Him if they had known Him, says the Apostle Peter; 6, the sinner is a rebel against the Divine Majesty and has entered into league with the demons to dethrone the Lord of heaven

and earth by executing their wills. The sinner should know, and his reason convinces him of it, that he stands condemned before the infinitely just God, and only one thing interposes between him and the awful judgment of Him Whom he has outraged, and that is His mercy in the tribunal of reconciliation. Which will it be, condemnation or pardon? 8. The despised publican was forgiven because of his humble prayer; the penitent thief was promised paradise, because he humbly asked the Saviour hanging on the cross to remember him in His kingdom. If the penitent sinner confesses in all humility and in all sincerity all his sins, he is promised the same pardon through the merits of Jesus Christ his Redeemer, for a contrite and humble heart God will not despise. (Hamon).

If the penitent has committed only one mortal sin in his life, these considerations are equally expedient to excite in him a true humility, even though the sin may already have been forgiven; for it should be deplored as long as he lives. He was once a rebel, a traitor, a murderer and a slave of Satan and deserved a place among the damned. Is that not a sufficient reason to weep over one's sin during one's whole life? Remember Peter's denials and his lifelong tears. If one has never sinned mortally, the consideration of being less worthy of God's affection and love through wilful venial sin, the consciousness of having deserved a lower or less honorable place among the saints, and the thought of the ingratitude attached to venial sin, by which the best and most loving Father is offended, is sufficient to make the penitent forever truly humble.

212. When is our confession sincere?

Our confession is sincere when we tell our sins honestly and truthfully, neither exaggerating nor excusing them.

Confession is sincere when it is truthful and conforms to the facts disclosed to our mind by a careful examination of conscience. It is always a sacrilege

knowingly to deceive the confessor in anything relating to the necessary matter of the Sacrament, for it makes the confession null and void. Hence it is a sacrilege to increase or diminish the number of mortal sins committed, although ignorant people might be excused from grave guilt when they think that there is no harm in an exaggeration, because the smaller number is contained in the larger. It is a sacrilege knowingly to confess a mortal sin as voluntary, if it was committed without advertence to the guilt or offense or without full consent of the will. It is also gravely wrong to bring forward an untruthful excuse which, if true, would make of a mortal sin a venial sin, and likewise to allege some false criminal intent or circumstance that would, if true, make a venial sin mortal. In all such cases only ignorance can excuse the deceiver from the guilt of mortal sin and of sacrilege. Lastly, it is a grave sin to feign a true sorrow or firm purpose of sinning no more.

An untruth about one's name, family, country, nationality, ability, condition or occupation or about one's age, or circumstances which have nothing to do with the sins to be confessed and consequently do not materially aggrevate or lessen the guilt, would be only a venial sin. It is not contrary to truth or veracity in the penitent to have two or more confessors: one to whom mortal sins are confessed, and one or more others, to whom, because better known, only venial sins are confessed. Such foolish conduct would be sinful only on account of an evil intention, e. g., to commit sin with more freedom, or if the penitent first confesses his venial sins, omitting the mortal sins, and afterwards goes to another confessor to confess his mortal sins. It is evident that in the last case the first confession is sacrilegious.

Remark. As a sincere, truthful and honest confession can only be called such, when it is in all respects conscientious and conformable to our interior state, to the mind and the heart, as we know ourselves, it evidently contains many of the qualities enumerated by St. Thomas and others before him, as necessary qualities of a good confession; and without doubt a sincere, truthful and honest confession will always be entire, for is not confession a true and honest manifestation of one's conscience in the tribunal of penance, where the penitent, the only witness, must, according to divine institution, tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

213. When is our confession entire?

Our confession is entire, when we tell the number and kinds of our sins and the circumstances which change their nature.

Here we are taught in what particular manner confession should be sincere, truthful, and honest, viz.: it must be entire, and by this we mean that nothing should be omitted in the manifestation of our conscience which by divine law, interpreted by the Church, should be declared to the priest, the judge of the sacred tribunal. Understood in its widest sense, the integrity of confession differs but little from its veracity, truthfulness and sincerity. Sincerity or candor eliminates both excess and defect or omission in the manifestation of our conscience; but integrity excludes omissions only. Integrity opposed to wilful omission of what we are bound to confess will alone be explained in this number.

The integrity of confession may be considered under two different aspects: a) when the confession conforms absolutely to the facts, so that one confesses all the mortal sins (with their number, their different species, and necessary circumstances) which have been committed after Baptism, and which have not directly been forgiven by a previous good confession. Then such confession is absolutely or materially entire; i. e., its integrity is absolutely real or material. But who does not see that such an integrity, although obligatory, (Trent. Sess. 14, Can. 7) is in many cases pratically or morally impossible, especially so, if the penitent confesses after a long lapse of time and is besides uneducated? Hence a relative or formal integrity is sufficient, if an absolutely real or material integrity be morally impossible. b) By a relative or formal integrity is meant that which one is bound to have, if a material integrity be impossible or cannot be obtained without great trouble. An example will make this clear: the penitent goes to church for his annual confession; he examines his conscience carefully for twenty minutes, more or less, according to necessity. At the end of that time if he conscientiously thinks that he knows all the mortal sins (with their necessary circumstances and

number) which he has committed since his last worthy confession, as well as his doubtful mortal sins, even though he may judge that in case he should go over his examination again, he might possibly find some other sins, he is not bound to repeat the examination over and over again; because that would be a torture to his conscience such as some Protestants falsely impute to the Catholic practice. If this knowledge conforms absolutely to the reality as God sees it, and if he so confesses, his confession is materially and absolutely entire; but if he forgets some sins in the examination or forgets to confess some, his confession is indeed only relatively entire, yet with due regard to the capacity of the penitent, this relative integrity is sufficient.

What are the general causes excusing the penitent from an absolute integrity? These three: forgetfulness or inculpable ignorance, physical inability and moral inability.

1. **Forgetfulness or inculpable ignorance.** As to forgetfulness, the example given above is to the point: the penitent must examine his conscience seriously and diligently with that moral care and diligence one bestows upon a business of importance. (Trent, Sess. 14, ch. 5). He is not obliged to write his sins and read them in the confessional, but he is not forbidden to do so. If this preliminary examination is done conscientiously and one afterwards forgets a mortal sin in confession, he is bound to confess the forgotten mortal sin in his next confession, if it come to his mind.

2. **Culpable and inculpable ignorance.** Ignorance is culpable when one does not confess some sins, because one wilfully neglects to discriminate between mortal and venial sins; and it is inculpable, if by mistake or for a valid reason one judges that the sin which is truly mortal is only a venial sin and, therefore, not necessary to confess.

3. **Physical inability founded on natural impediments.** Those who do not speak the language of the confessor are excused from the integrity of the confession; but if the confessor can understand a few words, such people cannot be wholly excused from their annual confession; they should try to confess at least one sin that the priest can understand and find sufficient matter for absolution.

The dumb must give at least signs of contrition; usually however the fact that they come to the priest for absolution, is a sufficient sign. In both cases those ignorant of the priest's language and deaf-mutes are not obliged to have recourse to

interpreters or to writing as decreed by the Council of Lateran. The confessor may advise such penitents to have recourse to either an interpreter or to writing, but only for the greater security or peace of the penitent, and it cannot be imposed upon those unwilling to do so. (St. Liguori, vi. 479; St. Thos., Suppl. q. 9, a. 3, to 2).

Those in their agony, or the dying, should confess one sin, if possible, and if that is not possible, they are requested to give some sign of contrition; and the latter is often the only practical way in shipwrecks, in battles, also in fires from which there is no escape, e. g., when in the presence of a priest, people leap to safety or death.

4. **Moral impediment.** This impediment excuses a penitent from absolute integrity, when it is not possible without serious detriment to himself, to the confessor or to a third person. Hence, when one is seriously hurt in an accident or when one is in a hospital ward with others near by, he is excused from confessing all his sins, if there be danger of being overheard or understood by those present. Again, in a contagious disease, when the confessor cannot remain long with the penitent without danger, the penitent may easily be excused from absolute integrity of confession.

Species and Circumstances of Mortal Sin.

The catechism says well that we have to confess all our mortal sins and their species and circumstances that change their nature. What is understood by species and circumstances? By the species of sin is meant the lowest species or subdivision of any general sin against God, our neighbor or ourselves. We sin against God by sins against any of the commandments of God or of His Church, particularly by breaking the first three commandments of the Decalogue; and against our neighbor, by breaking one of the last seven commandments. Again, we can sin against the commandments by omitting what they command or by doing what they forbid in thought, desire or intention, word or deed. It is not enough to say: I sinned against the second commandment, because there are many species of sins against that commandment: viz., perjury, cursing, blasphemy, etc. It is not enough to say: I have committed three mortal sins of injustice against my neighbor, if one has stolen from him, defamed him or wilfully de-

stroyed his property. It is not enough to say: I have been impure, for there are many species of impurity, viz., alone or with others, with persons of the same sex or not, with single or married persons, with relatives or not, and again in thoughts, desires, words and deeds.

As it is necessary to confess all specific sins or the different species of sin, it is also necessary to confess the circumstances that change the species: fornication becomes adultery, incest or sacrilege, accordingly as it is committed by a married person or with a married person, or with a relative, or by or with a religious person. Likewise it is necessary to add to a specific sin such circumstances as make a mortal sin venial, or a venial sin mortal; but in the former case the penitent, if sufficiently instructed, need not confess it at all, if a mortal sin becomes venial for the want of full advertence or perfect consent of the will.

There is no obligation to confess circumstances that do not change a sin from venial to mortal or **vice versa,** or such circumstances as do not add a new sin, but only aggravate a sin in the same species: therefore such circumstances as the duration of the sinful act, its intensity, the dignity of the person, the holy season or day on which it is committed, need not be confessed; for St. Thomas says that the quantity or extent of the guilt cannot be ascertained by the priest, as the penitent himself does not know it. (St. Alph. No. 468). Notwithstanding, if the confessor should inquire about the circumstances of the sinful act to form a correct judgment in the case, the penitent is bound to answer his questions.

The following remarks may be useful in practice:

1st. If one intends or desires to commit a sin, and then does commit it, he needs only to confess the deed, unless before a sinful deed, he had already retracted a bad resolution already made; and in the latter case, there are two different sins: the one of evil intention, which he has abandoned, and the other the deed.

2nd. If one is in doubt whether he has to confess a sin or not, he must confess it, and it matters not whether this doubt

arises from a want of full advertence, or of perfect consent of the will in the mortal sin committed, or whether the doubt springs from an uncertain commission or omission, or whether or not a mortal sin was confessed before, or finally whether the penitent was ignorant of the nature of the sin, i. e., if mortal or only venial. In case of any such doubt penitents should confess it as it appears to them, and then the confessor may, if he sees fit, instruct them what to do in similar cases in the future, either by repressing those of a lax conscience, or by encouraging the timidly scrupulous and submissive penitents, but always acting sternly with the self-willed. (Mgr. Haine, De Poen. q. 45, 46; De Euch a. 56, 57).

3rd. If one has in good faith confessed a mortal sin as doubtful, he need not confess it over again, if he finds out afterwards that the sin was undoubtedly mortal.

4th. It is not always easy to determine whether a sin of commission or omission is in itself mortal or venial. When is detraction or backbiting only a venial sin, and when does it become mortal? We all know that to say about a young lady that she is proud and vain is not a mortal sin, and that it would be a mortal sin to say of her that we know she frequents secretly at night the society of lewd men, unless this fact had become notorious and public; but between vanity and keeping company with immoral people, there are many grades of guilt. Who is the best judge of the guilt but the priest thereto appointed in the tribunal of penance? If a penitent is capable of judging of a sin whether it is mortal or venial, he may follow his opnion; but if he is in doubt, it is preferable to manifest a sin as it appears to him.

5th. All sins of impurity are by their nature mortal, but for the want of advertence or full consent, bad thoughts and desires become venial sins or no sin at all. People who lead devout lives, especially the more timid and scrupulous, need generally not trouble themselves about such sins, and should be forbidden to confess them, unless they are positive that knowingly and willingly they entertained the evil desires or evil thoughts. The presumption is rather against those who have led immoral or very indifferent lives; and if they doubt whether their consent was full or not, they should be advised to confess their sins as doubtful.

We should judge likewise about those who are naturally inclined to sins of injustice, of hatred and ill-will toward their neighbor, etc.

6th. If there is question of a mortal sin that has certainly been committed, but of which penitents are in doubt whether they have confessed it or not, what should be done?

We are taught that it is imposed upon all to confess their mortal sins committed after Baptism; therefore, if the penitent

has no reason, no good ground and nothing to sustain the opinion that he did confess it, he is bound to do so at his next confession; but if he has some good reason to think that he has confessed it, he may without fear of committing a sacrilege, decide not to confess it. Still it is more salutary and advisable to manifest it to the priest as doubtfully confessed; for in all those cases the devil may take advantage of our neglect and represent it as a grievous sacrilege at the hour of death. The peace and tranquillity of conscience is worth more than the trouble and humiliation of confessing.

7th. There are other circumstances besides those already mentioned, which should be confessed:

(a) The intention, as that of committing a greater sin than the one actually perpetrated, e. g., the desire and intention to steal $5.00 when in reality only $1.00 was stolen. To confess the theft of $1.00 would not be enough.

(b) We should also confess the hatred and vindictiveness of a mortal nature that accompanies an action or conversation which in itself is only a venial sin. But if the deed itself was already mortal, the circumstances of hatred, envy or revenge need not necessarily be expressed, as the wilful deed supposes them.

(c) Scandal. Cursing is in itself a mortal sin, but cursing in the hearing of others, especially little ones, and above all the curses of fathers or mothers in the presence of their children, not only aggravates the sin, but adds a new sin, that of scandal. Beware of scandal, for "Woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh." (Mat. xviii. 7).

(d) Although there is no strict obligation to confess venial sins, doubtful mortal sins should be confessed in order not to expose the penitent to the danger of committing a sacrilege; and all people should be advised to confess their venial sins; because it makes the penitent more careful to shun them, it helps him in avoiding mortal sin, and it opens the way to more abundant sacramental graces.

When we say that doubtful mortal sins should be confessed, we mean that this practice should generally be followed, but people who have not confessed a doubtful mortal sin, should not think they have made a bad confession on that account, if in their conscience they thought there was no obligation to confess the doubtful mortal sin.

214. What should we do if we cannot remember the number of our sins?

If we cannot remember the number of our sins, we should tell the number as nearly as possible, and say

how often we have sinned in a day, a week, or a month; or how long the practice has lasted.

There is question of the number in any specific sin. Let us take as an example the most common sin, cursing, and we will suppose that the penitent has a more or less bad habit of cursing. If he goes to confession monthly, he will do well to examine himself on the exact number; if he can count them, he confesses the number of times, but if he is not sure that it may not be one or two more, or one or two less, he confesses it with the addition, "more or less." If this is not possible, he asks himself: how many times a day? Sometimes twice, perhaps, or three times, or even four times is the average; in that case by confessing "three times more or less," he confesses his sins as nearly as he can. If this is practicably impossible, he gives the times more or less he has cursed each day during the period the habit lasted; and if this is not possible, he counts the number of times a week, a month or a year, if months or years have passed since his last confession. Finally, if he is so habitual and inveterate a blasphemer or curser that he cannot tell how many times he sinned in a day, week, month or year, he may give the time his habit lasted. When the penitent is of good will, no matter how ignorant he may be, a few questions by his confessor, will be sufficient to arrive at the necessary integrity of the confession, and if the penitent has answered candidly to the interrogatory, he need not trouble himself about the validity of the confession or of the absolution.

A perfect manner of confessing is an art based upon the knowledge of all that the Commandments forbid, enjoin or command, and like all arts it needs practice. If people avail themselves often, say monthly, of this salutary bath to wash away their sins, even the most ignorant will learn to confess properly and expeditiously, and save the confessor much trouble and anxiety.

215. Is our confession worthy if without our fault we forget to confess a mortal sin?

If without our fault, we forget to confess a mortal sin, our confession is worthy and the sin is forgiven; but it must be told in confession if it again come to our mind.

There are three things to be considered in this answer: the obligation to confess all our mortal sins is based upon the divine command necessarily contained in the power to bind or to loose, granted by the Saviour to His Apostles, as we have explained. The sin may have been forgiven, either by an act of perfect contrition, or by a Sacrament of the Living received, when one was not conscious of the mortal sin; or it may be forgiven with other sins duly confessed when the sin was forgotten, but this does not dispense from the strict obligation to confess all mortal sins that have not been directly forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance.

1. If a penitent forgets a mortal sin, the confession is worthy and good, because we suppose the forgetfulness unavoidable, and hence the Sacrament must produce its effect, as no obstacle was placed to its efficacy, and, therefore, all the sins duly confessed are forgiven as well as the forgotten sins. The forgotten sin is also forgiven, because one mortal sin cannot be forgiven unless all are forgiven. We cannot be a friend of God and an enemy of God at the same time. God is not merciful by halves: He receives the sinner back into His friendship wholly and entirely, or not at all.

2. When mortal sins are forgiven sanctifying grace is infused into the soul, but this cannot be done when one mortal sin remains unforgiven.

In the preceding number there was question of what we should do when we cannot remember the number of our sins. If you suppose now the number was given incorrectly by mistake or forgetfulness, the same rule here applies and the confession is worthy, but as to the manner of rectifying mistakes, the very nature of things demands a different solution.

Let us suppose that, after making his confession, the penitent finds out that he made a misstatement as to the exact number. He said seven times and he finds now that it was eight or only six. In that case in his first subsequent confession, after becoming aware of the mistake, he must correct himself and give the exact number; but if we suppose that he qualified his statement

by adding more or less, in that case the seven more or less contains both the six and eight times, and no correction need be made. But if he find that when he said seven times, the statement was too low by two, as it was nine times, he is obliged to correct it; for two is not contained in the given number more or less, if the number is as small as seven. But two would be contained in the more or less, when the number is larger, as fifteen times more or less. Still if he exaggerated the number seven by two and he finds afterwards that it was only five times, he need not correct that mistake, because this number seven certainly contains the number five.

By this we see that we should always add "more or less" when we think that the exact number may be a little below or a little above the number we give. Nevertheless, if we think that the number of some species of sins is either seven or eight, we should not say "seven times more or less," but confess it as it is, seven or eight times.

Forgotten sins, as has been said, should be confessed and mistakes corrected in our first confession after we become aware of them, but may we wait until our next ordinary confession, e. g., the next annual confession? Whoever is guilty of a mortal sin should as soon as practicable have recourse to the Sacrament of Penance because in that state he remains an enemy of God and he is in danger of losing his soul; but the case is different when the mortal sin has been indirectly forgiven, and, therefore, he may defer the correction until his next regular confession, even if it be delayed until the following Easter.

216. Is it a grievous offense wilfully to conceal a mortal sin in confession?

It is a grievous offense wilfully to conceal a mortal sin in confession, because we thereby tell a lie to the Holy Ghost, and make our confession worthless.

Wilfully to leave one mortal sin unconfessed is a grievous offense, unless, as we said before, physical or moral impediments prevent the penitent from so doing; and the sin we thereby commit is one of the greatest sins that can be committed, for it is a sacrilege. A sacrilege is an irreverence towards—and a violation of—a sacred place, a sacred person or a sacred thing; but of all the irreverences and the indignities that can be committed against any of the three, the violation of the Sacraments instituted by Christ for our sanctification, is the most heinous. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 99, a. 2, c). By wilfully

concealing a mortal sin, the penitent deceives the judge appointed by God in the sacred tribunal: it is a lie against the Holy Ghost, to Whom our holy Religion attributes in a special manner our sanctification. The sinner turns the sacred fountain of reconciliation, to which the merits of Jesus Christ are attached, into a foul pool of infection to his greater condemnation; he makes the Sacrament null and void, and he adds one more crime to his guilt.

There are three things that should be borne in mind to deter a Christian from attempting to receive this Sacrament with a guilty conscience: he that conceals a mortal sin, tells a lie to the Holy Ghost, makes his confession invalid or worthless, and commits a horrible sacrilege. (Cf. No. 309 on sacrilege).

Remark. Not every lie told in confession is a mortal sin. A penitent who lies about his name, family, country, occupation, age, etc., or about other things that have no connection with the necessary matter of confession, sins only venially; but he would sin grievously, not only if he conceals a mortal sin, but also if he accuses himself of a mortal sin he has not committed, whether he does it for the sake of humility, or to see what effect it may have on the confessor, or to find out what questions it may occasion; and it is also a mortal sin if one falsely accuse himself of only one sin, even if it be a venial one, and mentions no other sin, unless he be excused through ignorance; for in that case the Sacrament is invalid. It is moreover generally a grievous fault to deny, when questioned, a mortal sin already previously confessed; for the habit of sinning and the proximate occasion of sin, besides the sin itself, belong to the remote matter of the Sacrament. Pope Innocent XI condemned the proposition that "we are not bound to admit the habit of sinning to the confessor who inquires about it." Finally, the penitent is guilty of a sacrilege, if he deceives the confessor by saying that he has diligently examined his conscience, or that he has a true, sincere, supernatural and supreme sorrow for all his mortal sins and the firm purpose of sinning no more, if one of those dispositions of a good confession is wanting; for the confessor relies upon them as facts, or at least on their moral certainty before absolving the penitent.

217. What must he do who has wilfully concealed a mortal sin in confession?

He who has wilfully concealed a mortal sin in confession, must not only confess it, but also repeat all the sins he has committed since his last worthy confession.

In this answer the catechism gives the ordinary and most common occurrence which obliges a sincere penitent to repeat a confession and all invalid confessions that follow a bad confession, as well as all mortal sins committed from the time he made his last worthy confession; and he is likewise bound to include in his sincere confession the number of sacrilegious confessions, communions and other Sacraments received in the state of mortal sin. The reason of this obligation is that none of his mortal sins have been directly or indirectly forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance, as we suppose that all his confessions, subsequent to his first unworthy confession, were also culpably invalid. The case would be different, if after one or more invalid confessions he forgot in subsequent confessions all about his previous sacrileges and made, as far as he knew, a good and worthy confession. In this case he is bound only to repeat the unworthy confession, with all the mortal sins committed since the last good confession, as well as those forgotten in the worthy confessions.

An unworthy confession is not to be too readily supposed, but the concealing of the sin must have been done with full advertence and full consent of the will to make it a mortal sin; or if it be doubtful, a general rule is applicable: viz., that in case of doubt we should stand for the validity of the act. Still in this case it is advisable to make a general repetition of a doubtfully valid confession in order to secure greater peace of mind; we except, however, scrupulous people, who are always troubled about their former confessions.

It is no less a lie against the Holy Ghost, if one commences his confession by saying: "Father, I have not sinned much, and I will confess some sins of my past life," and if then he mixes new mortal sins with old ones already confessed because it is a true deception and equivalent to concealing new sins in confession.

The concealing of a mortal sin is not the sole cause of an invalid confession: a grievously culpable neglect in the examination of conscience, an insufficient contrition and a want of an implicit or explicit purpose of sinning no more, are also causes of invalid confessions; and the last is a most serious obstacle to a valid absolution, especially among those who live in the proximate occasion of sin. Still there are other causes, viz., the want of faith, mainly in the efficacy of the Sacrament, a mistrust in God's mercy, an evil intention in coming to confession, or of not complying with the penance, an unwillingness to confess or to be absolved, e. g., when a penitent is compelled to go to confession, either by parents or superiors. But we should bear in mind that a certain dislike for telling one's sins, or a displeasure in being forced to forego some amusement, as happens among children, does not invalidate the confession; and with regard to the penance, the intention of not complying with the penance must be formed before or during the absolution; for the neglect of its performance or the intention of not performing it, made after the absolution, although it may be a mortal sin would not make the absolution void. Hence, if there was only a culpable neglect in performing the penance at the proper time, the sin has to be confessed in the next confession, but the whole confession has not to be repeated.

In all those cases where the effects of the Sacrament are frustrated through the grievous fault of the penitent, the same obligation falls upon him, as if he had willfully concealed a mortal sin.

There is still another but rare circumstance that would invalidate a confession, and that is the want of jurisdiction or proper intention of the confessor; as when confessions are made to a pseudo-priest, or if to a priest, to a schismatic or excommunicated priest. Such cases are rare, but if they happen, the penitent, if he become aware of it, is bound to repeat his confession, as if no confession had been made. If the confessor through mistake or otherwise had failed to ask authorization from the bishop or ordinary to hear confessions, the penitent would be obliged to repeat his confession to a duly authorized priest, unless he made his confession when in danger of death, for the Church is then supposed to supply all necessary jurisdiction.

Is it allowed to confess to a lay person? Such a confession is undoubtedly permissible, barring the danger of scandal, and provided the intention be good; but such a confession is never obligatory not even in danger of death, when no priest is available. Such a confession must not be considered as a sacramental confession, for no lay person can lay claim to the power of absolving; but it may in particular cases, in the absence of a priest, tend to quiet timid people or those who need advice or

instruction regarding their contrition or the obligation of restitution, etc. The sincere humility and true detestation of sin in a confession to a lay person, coupled with the earnest desire of receiving God's pardon of which it is a proof, cannot fail to gain favor before God.

When is a general confession advisable?

1. A general confession including all the mortal sins of one's life is not only advisable but obligatory, if a penitent has sometimes made sacrilegious confessions, and it is morally impossible to ascertain when he made a good or a bad confession, or when his good confessions began; and this is especially the case with sinners, who have in the past led habitually sinful lives, or lived in the proximate occasion of sin or at least have usually led very careless lives by following their inclinations without fear of God or His judgments. For such people, sincere return to God and renunciation of their evil ways without a general confession seems practically impossible. Should they refuse to do so, it is for the confessor to judge whether or not absolution shall be denied.

2. A general confession is advisable whenever some considerable fruit may expected from it, e. g., when through fear, ignorance, carelessness or a sinful life, the penitent may have been guilty of a sacrilegious confession; and a general confession is especially to be recommended in a long sickness and principally when patients are near their agony and have never made one before; this can easily be done in a general way with the help of the priest by means of a few questions on the commandments of God and of His Church, etc.

It is also recommended to those who enter upon a new life, like the married state, the military or religious life. It is finally advisable for all those who have some good reason to doubt whether they are in the state of grace; but this should be allowed but once. Thereafter they may be allowed to confess only such sins as they may have forgotten in the previous general confession.

3. A general confession should be allowed once even to timid and scrupulous people; but the scrupulous penitent should understand that to obey the confessor is to obey God Himself, for he occupies God's place as His delegate, and furthermore a penitent cannot mistake if he obeys. For should the confessor make a mistake, the penitent by obeying pleases God, and the confessor is alone to blame; but if the penitent disobeys the priest in confession, he disobeys God and he willfully condemns himself. How inconsistent scrupulous persons are! They go to the priest to have their sins forgiven and they refuse to follow his advice or to obey his orders. Scruples are increased not so much by too frequent confessions as by a continual or frequent

change of confessors; a priest is a physician of souls, therefore one should regularly go to the same physician who is already acquainted with their spiritual ailments.

4. An annual confession, that is, a general confession of all the sins committed during the year, is very useful to all, but especially to people who desire to make progress in virtue and aim at perfection; and this is advisable, no matter what their state of life may be. The penitent should not use for such confessions the eve of great feasts, when many other penitents are waiting for their turn. Penitents who wish to make a general confession should previously arrange with the priest about the day and hour he can hear them.

5. People should bear in mind that when they make a general confession, they should not, if they have committed any mortal sin since their last confession, mix up their old and new sins. They should first confess those committed since the last confession, unless all their confessions have been unworthy, for then it is indifferent how they begin.

218. Why does the priest give us a penance after confession?

The priest gives us a penance after confession, that we may satisfy God for the temporal punishment due to our sins.

We have seen that there are on the part of the penitent three requisite acts in the Sacrament of Penance, unless a physical or moral impossibility dispense him: viz., contrition, confession and satisfaction. The most essential of the three is contrition, for no sin can be forgiven without it; confession is required, but when it is absolutely or morally impossible, a sign, a gesture may take its place; and now the third, also an integral part of the Sacrament needs to be explained, viz., the satisfaction or the acceptance of the penance given by the priest.

The catechism gives the answer to the question, why a penance is given by the priest, or, what is the same, why the penance is an integral part of the Sacrament of Penance.

The doctrine of the Church is very clear on the subject: the penalty due to mortal sin is eternal punishment, as we explained in the last lesson. But in the

Sacrament of Penance God substitutes for it a temporal penalty. When Adam sinned, God made the promise of a Redeemer Who was to satisfy for his sin; but the temporal punishment was not taken away: he lost for himself and his posterity all his preternatural gifts and he was doomed to misery and death. (Gen. iii. 17-19, Cf. No. 44). The same may be said of David's sins and his forgiveness as to their guilt, while the temporal punishment, the death of his son, was required. (2 Kings, xii. 7-18).

This doctrine fully agrees with the teaching of St. Paul, when he said, "Fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ." (Col. i. 24). "If we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him" (Rom. viii. 17). What? Can there be anything wanting in the sufferings of Christ? Are they not infinite in merit? They are truly infinite in merit, but reason dictates to us that something would be wanting in the sufferings of Christ, unless we also suffer with Him. Is it proper and right that the innocent Incarnate God should suffer the most cruel torments and the guilty go entirely free? No, answers St. Paul, for he that expects to be glorified with Christ in heaven, must suffer with Christ on earth.

We conclude from what has been said, and from the fact that the confessor has to impose a penance on the penitent, as satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to sin, that the penitent is bound to accept the penance and perform it, if it be in his power. (Trent, Sess. 14, ch. 8).

219. Does not the Sacrament of Penance remit all punishment due to sin?

The Sacrament of Penance remits the eternal punishment due to sin, but it does not always remit the temporal punishment which God requires as a satisfaction for our sins.

The Sacrament of Penance was instituted to forgive sins committed after Baptism, whether mortal or venial, but principally mortal sins, for venial sins can be forgiven without it. Two things are to be considered in mortal sin: the guilt and the eternal punishment due to sin. Both the guilt that deprives the sinner of sanctifying grace together with the friendship of God, and the eternal punishment that follows and accompanies

that guilt, are forgiven by Penance; so that when the penitent, who puts no obstacle to the efficacy of the Sacrament, receives absolution, he is free from the guilt he contracted by sinning grievously and from the eternal penalty which the justice of God imposes as a punishment for that heinous offense. Furthermore, he is restored again to the friendship of God by the infusion of sanctifying grace into the soul, which entitles him again to heavenly reward and enables him to acquire greater merit. Nevertheless the eternal punishment due to his sins is, as it were, commuted or changed into a temporal punishment, for it is not just that the innocent God should suffer alone, and that the sinner who is the cause of the sufferings of his Redeemer should have no share in them.

In Baptism all punishment due to sin is remitted, but not necessarily so in the Sacrament of Penance; for often there remains some temporal punishment due to sin to be satisfied for in this world, or after this life in purgatory. The Council of Trent (Sess. 14, ch. 8) explains this seeming incongruity by saying that "Divine justice seems to demand, that those who before Baptism sinned through ignorance, be received into grace in a different manner from that of those who, having been once delivered from the slavery of the devil and having received the Holy Ghost, fear not knowingly and willingly to desecrate the temple of God and to displease the Holy Ghost." We infer from this that it seems meet and just that those who have received Baptism and afterwards fall into mortal sin should not, owing to their greater ingratitude and the graces received in Baptism, be entirely forgiven without undergoing some penalty.

Since it has been proved that satisfaction is an integral part of Penance, one question still remains: how and when shall we comply with the penance imposed on us by the confessor? It is a mortal sin not to perform a penance imposed for mortal sins already confessed and forgiven, or to defer it for a considerable time, unless, for some reason, the confessor imposes a penance exceedingly light, like three "Hail Marys." If only venial sins have been confessed, the imposed penance cannot oblige under pain of mortal sin.

As the penance generally imposed by confessors, with due regard to the spiritual welfare and disposition of the penitent, is usually but light, we must scrupulously observe the terms of the penance enjoined as to the time and manner of performing it; and if no time has been determined, we ought to perform it

as soon as practicable; for an integral part of the Sacrament should not be unduly separated from confession, contrition and absolution: there is always danger of forgetting it; and venial sin would diminish, while mortal sin would wholly take away its merit. To delay the performance of the penance would often frustrate another purpose of satisfaction, viz., to enable the penitent to persevere in the state of grace and to strengthen him against future temptations.

The penance should be performed humbly and cheerfully, in the knowledge that it is a commutation of the greater penalty our sins deserve and not to be compared to the arduous penances imposed in the first centuries of the Church. (Cf. Appendix —Indulgences).

We ought to bear in mind what St. Augustine teaches us, when addressing our Lord, he says: "Thou dost pardon, Lord, the sinner who confesses his sin, but on condition that he punish himself for it." Hence penances, mortifications of the flesh, and fasts, freely undertaken, and humiliations, sickness, accidents, loss of those we love and all other miseries of life borne with resignation, should be added to the sacramental penance.

Finally, in imitation of our Saviour and of the saints who have walked in His footsteps, we should prefer poverty to riches, contempt and humiliation to honors and glory, sufferings to enjoyments. Even if in our judgment we have fully satisfied for all our sins, charity should impel us to satisfy for other members of the Church, especially for those near and dear to us, and also for the souls in Purgatory. With the same end in view we should shun worldly amusements, especially those dangerous to morality; and rather seek satisfaction in pious pleasures and in the performance of our duty, bearing in mind what St. Pacian is said to have answered to his friends who invited him to join them in their many pleasure parties: "I leave all that to holy souls; as for me who have sinned and am in danger of sinning again, my duty is to weep and to perform penance." (Baronius).

220. Why does God require a temporal punishment as a satisfaction for sin?

God requires a temporal punishment as a satisfaction for sin, to teach us the great evil of sin and to prevent us from falling again.

There has been question in the two preceding numbers of the temporal punishment due to sin and of the necessity of satisfying for all sins committed. Now the catechism asks a question more general in its scope as

it relates to all punishment as a satisfaction for sin. Besides the sacramental satisfaction, there are many other ways of satisfying God's justice, but all punishment which is not eternal and is, therefore, called temporal, is imposed by God also for other purposes besides that of the satisfaction for sin. Indeed all temporal punishment must be considered in the light of a penalty, and as such, it is punitive and medicinal. As punitive it is a certain compensation for the offense committed against the Supreme Majesty; as medicinal it regards the future, for it preserves also from future sin. (St. Thos. Supp., q. 15, a. 1).

If we now consider penance as a remedy for the past as well as for the future, we find four properties assigned by many to penance: viz., punitive, vindictive, medicinal and preservative, which opinion also agrees with the mind of the Council of Trent when it declares (Sess. 14, on Penance, ch. 8) that penance or satisfaction "should not be done solely for the preservation of a new life and for a medicine of our infirmity, but also to avenge and punish past sins."

Although there are other ways of satisfying the justice of God than by the sacramental satisfaction, this satisfaction has a special merit from the institution of Christ; and, therefore, penitents ought to be exceedingly thankful when a heavy penance is imposed upon them. Accordingly many devout persons often beg for heavier penances, when they think their confessor too lenient.

Too often confessors are obliged, through fear of discouraging the sinner, to impose as a rule penances so light as to be entirely out of proportion to the sins of their penitents; for, as Tertullian says, we owe to God a penance that will be a compensation and, as it were, an abridgement of everlasting fire. Hence we are forced to admit the justice of what the Council of Trent teaches, when it says that our whole life ought to be a perpetual penance. In order to obtain a more correct knowledge of the enormity of sin and the necessity of satisfying for it, we need only dwell a moment on the miseries and sufferings of this life, which the sin of Adam brought upon himself and upon the whole human race. But more effective still is the serious consideration of the sufferings and ignominious death of the innocent Redeemer, freely borne by Him in order to satisfy for our sins; for nothing else can instill into our minds a

greater dread of sin, and nothing else is so efficacious in preventing us from falling again.

221. What are the chief means by which we satisfy God for the temporal punishments due to sin?

The chief means by which we satisfy God for the temporal punishments due to sin are: prayer, fasting, almsgiving, all spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and the patient suffering of the ills of life.

The catechism here speaks of the chief means to remit the temporal punishment due to sin. The most excellent of all means is of course the sacramental satisfaction imposed by the priest in confession and after that, any good work in itself, disagreeable or unpleasant, to which pain or trouble may be attached.

St. Thomas (Supp. q. 15, a. 3) names among the chief means of satisfaction for ourselves or others: prayer, i. e., the sacrifice made by the soul of itself; fasting, i. e., the sacrifice of the body; and almsgiving, a sacrifice of our worldly goods. For every sacrifice we make is necessarily made from one of the three things we possess and which we can part with or give up: a) the soul, and what is most pleasing to it or flatters it, viz., self-will, love of superiority and distinction, interior joy and contentment; b) the body, and the satisfaction of its sensual appetites, viz., ease, comfort, good cheer and palatable or exquisite fruit, entransing music, delightful scenes, pleasant odors, etc.; and finally, c) all worldly goods to which we are attached, but of which we divest ourselves for charity's sake.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 14, Can. 13) calls satisfactory deeds painful: "pains wilfully undertaken or inflicted by God, or enjoined by the priest" in confession.

Two things says the Angelic Doctor (Ib. a. 2) are necessary that an action be satisfactory, viz., it must be good or tending to God's honor, and it must be painful, i. e., take away something from the sinner, and hence it must include some sacrifice. Besides, the ills of this life, or other sufferings inflicted by God, demand a willing acceptance or resignation to them on our part, for otherwise these sufferings could not be said to be our own; they would be purely punitive or vindictive, like the sufferings of the damned. We should not fail to remark that even the least action done for the love of God contains some sacrifice, as for instance, when we humble ourselves in prayer or feel the pain of sorrow for sins committed, when we part with anything for which we have an attachment, or when we counteract our natural inclinations, even if they are not sinful in themselves.

Hence, all spiritual and corporal works of mercy atone also for the temporal punishments due to sin, if performed with the proper disposition.

222. Which are the chief corporal works of mercy?

The chief corporal works of mercy are seven: to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to ransom the captive, to harbor the harborless, to visit the sick and to bury the dead.

The clear exposition of all the works of mercy, to be considered in this and subsequent numbers, is but a further explanation of the fifth beatitude: "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." There are many works of mercy, as there are many specific acts that can be performed out of compassionate feeling for our neighbor and all his needs. They spring from a true love of the neighbor, when it is similar to the love we should have for ourselves. The motive of an act of mercy determines its degree and species of goodness: an act of mercy done out of a purely sensible inclination or a natural compassion is not a virtuous act; it is natural benevolence; but if it be done because it is a duty, or because it is conformable to the principles of honesty and rectitude, then it is a moral virtue; if the love of God is the principle motive, it is then a theological virtue. Since we should always strive to perform all our actions with the best possible intention, we should consider all acts of mercy as done primarily for the love of God, for we owe it to ourselves to be merciful in the most perfect and meritorious manner. It is also a theological virtue, if we perform acts of mercy towards our neighbor, because of the divine precept to love him, provided this love be secondary only to the love of God. But who is our neighbor that he may be the object of our compassion? Simply he that is in need of our help, i. e., all people on earth including our enemies and also the souls in Purgatory; for we cannot help the damned in hell, and the angels and saints do not need our assistance.

The need of our neighbor may be spiritual or corporal, and by this is meant that our neighbor may be suffering in matters spiritual or in matters temporal, or that his soul or body may be in danger of such suffering that our help is required to avert it.

The corporal works of mercy for the relief of bodily suffering will be considered first.

Of the seven corporal works of mercy, four regard the ordinary and most common necessities of the body, viz., food, drink, clothing and dwelling; and the other

three have reference to needs in particular circumstances, viz., in sickness, in imprisonment and in death. All the corporal works may be classed as almsgiving; for if anyone cannot personally relieve the bodily needs of his neighbor, he may supply the deficiency by donations or alms, or have the work done by others.

We may note that whenever our neighbor is able to relieve his own wants, he has no right to expect aid from others: a man able but unwilling to work is not in real need; a so-called tramp, looking for easy work at high wages does not deserve any pity, and the unknown wayfarer without shelter, should not be received into our houses, for he may be bent on crime. The sick and disabled should be helped even if they, through their own fault or neglect, caused their inability to help themselves. As to ransoming the captive and imprisoned, those that are legally confined in prison and justly punished for their misdeeds should not be too easily pardoned, and much less ransomed. The charity we owe our neighbor obliges us to free, if we can, those we know to be unjustly detained in prison or reduced to ignominious slavery, and especially those who are persecuted for their faith in God and in His Church. To ransom the latter or aid in doing so, is an eminent temporal and spiritual work of mercy.

To bury the dead is praised in Holy Scripture, as we see in the case of Tobias; and by helping the poor, to bury their dead, or by accompanying the remains of friends and acquaintances to their last resting place, we perform a work of mercy, as we thereby honor those who still live in the memory and esteem of their fellowmen.

Almsgiving deserves a special consideration, although it is not mentioned among the corporal works of mercy; because, as we said above, it practically takes the place of them all and any kind of merciful deeds is a species of almsgiving. Are we obliged to help the needy? We are obliged to help our neighbor in an extreme or even in a great need, when we can do so; and by this is meant that we are bound to help him not only if without our aid, he would be in danger of dying for want of food, drink, clothing or shelter, for want of attendance in siskness, or for want of a ransom in captivity,

but even if, without our assistance, he is sure to suffer great bodily pains or injury, or suffer greatly in his reputation or honor.

If our neighbor is in extreme necessity, we are bound to employ what we possess in relieving him, even if we should thereby suffer considerable pain, exertion or annoyance. But we are not bound to do extraordinary things, such as to expose ourselves to great danger of our own life or to risk the lives of those we must protect, such as those of our own family: nor should we be obliged to give large sums of money to deliver anyone from unjust captivity. As to the great need of our neighbor, we are not bound to succor him by what is necessary for our own family, nor or we bound to give away what belongs to our condition of life; but we should at least retrench extravagances in order to assist the poor in great need.

Nowadays, the civil government of every civilized country in the world has taken the charge of caring for the poor among its subjects, and it seems that, except in some extraordinary and unexpected cases, a citizen who pays his share of the burden imposed by taxation, practically fulfills his obligation of charity towards the needy.

Still we have always poor among us, as our Saviour said, and if we are not bound under pain of mortal sin to assist them in their ordinary and common wants, because that is the duty of the state, yet can we be said to be entirely free from the obligation of helping them out of what is superfluous or remains over after we have provided for the support of ourselves and of those depending on us, and for all that is strictly necessary for the exigencies of our condition of life? This seems unreasonable, but, since it is difficult to determine the amount that should be devoted to the common poor, and as it is not practical to investigate what other God-fearing people do in similar cases, liberality to the poor should be considered a duty of the love we owe to ourselves, even if the love of neighbor does not bind us. Truly, who can enumerate the temporal and spiritual benefits to be gained through our compassion for and liberality towards the needy? Only the principal salutary effects are here given: 1st, liberality moderates the inordinate love of riches and the fear of losing them; 2nd, it obtains mercy from God for sinners, and we are all sinners,—and "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy"; 3rd, Christ, our Saviour, considers

the merciful deed done to others as done to Himself (Mat. xxv. 40); 4th, it is a precept often inculcated in the Old and New Testament, for Moses commanded his people, saying: "There will not be wanting poor in the land of thy habitation; therefore I command thee to open thy hand to thy needy and poor brother." (Deut. xv. 11). Hear Tobias in his last instruction to his son: "According to thy ability be merciful. If thou have much, give abundantly; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little." (Tob. iv. 8, 9). (See also Is. lviii. 7). St. Paul also recommends almsgiving. St. Augustine indeed remarks that God in Holy Scripture does not cease to exhort the people to give alms; 5th, "Alms deliver from all sin and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness." (Tob. iv. 11), "Mercy exalteth itself above justice." (Jas. ii. 13).

Our Lord has assured us that he that gives alms is clean. "Give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you." (Luke xi. 41).

6th. Nothing else than liberality to the poor is mentioned by St. Matthew as a necessary condition to receive a favorable sentence on the day of judgment. (Mat. xxv. 31-46).

On the contrary, what can be expected by the unmerciful, but "judgment without mercy for him that hath not done mercy" (St. Jas. ii. 13); and rightly so, for "With what judgment you judge ye shall be judged, and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Mat. vii. 2).

223. Which are the spiritual works of mercy?

The chief spiritual works of mercy are seven: to admonish the sinner, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive all injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead.

In the preceding number the excellence of corporal works of mercy has been set forth, but far more noble are the spiritual works, and that for three reasons: 1st. If we consider the object of the spiritual gift in itself in any merciful work, it totally surpasses the temporal works as spiritual or supernatural gifts exceed temporal gifts. Can we compare earth with heaven, worldly enjoyments with eternal happiness in God? 2nd. If we consider the subject upon whom mercy is bestowed, is the immortal soul not nobler than the corruptible body? and 3rd. If we consider the act itself

in spiritual and corporal works, in the former it is mainly one of the soul, while in the latter, it is principally the work of the body; and moreover the spiritual works of mercy are, generally speaking, supernatural or done for a supernatural motive, whilst the corporal works are often acts of benevolence, prompted by natural compassion. 4th. It is evidently more difficult to rise from the material to the supernatural than from the purely spiritual to the supernatural. Hence spiritual works of mercy, although more seldom practiced, are generally more meritorious. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 32, a. 3).

A short explanation of each spiritual work of mercy seems very useful, if not necessary.

1. To admonish the sinner. We are all obliged to prevent sin in others if possible. Zeal for the honor and glory of God, Who by sin is offended, the love of our neighbor's spiritual welfare demands it. There are three principal means to be employed: (A) by prayer; (B) by admonishing the sinner or by fraternal correction, and (C), by punishing sin.

(A) By prayer. Prayer, here called a spiritual work, will be considered in its proper place.

(B) By admonishing the sinner. Nothing greater can be imagined than to co-operate with God in the conversion of sinners, and nothing is more difficult than to undertake fraternal correction successfully. Is fraternal correction a duty? As it has the amendment of our neighbor for object, it is enjoined as a precept, as far as it may be necessary to procure that amendment; but this precept does not bind us always and everywhere. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 33, a. 1, 2). To be bound by the divine precept of fraternal correction, it is commonly required that the sin of the neighbor be a mortal sin, or that it may through scandal or otherwise lead to mortal sin; that there be a probable hope of success, for correction often irritates the obstinate sinner and causes him to blaspheme; that no one better fitted will undertake the correction; and that there be little probability that the sinner will be converted without it.

(C) To admonish the sinner is principally the duty of superiors, and they are likewise bound to punish offenders, especially if the offense includes obstinacy. By superior we mean here parents, masters or employers, those who for the time being have parental authority, like guardians and teachers, and all those charged with the spiritual welfare of others, viz., the Pope, the bishop, the parish priest and his assistants, the superiors of religious communities, etc.

For successful fraternal correction the following rules may serve as a guide: charity should be the main motive of undertaking it; the superior should study the character or disposition of the offender; commonly use moderation and gentleness in word or action, and always so at first; employ great severity only when other means have failed, and even then maintain internal calmness.

2. To instruct the ignorant. By the ignorant are meant here those that are ignorant of the doctrine and the duties of a Christian. This spiritual work of mercy belongs again mainly to parents, Catholic teachers, and all those that are charged with the spiritual welfare of souls. Nevertheless, there are many cases where neither parents nor priests can properly attend to that duty, as when there is no resident Catholic priest, no Catholic school, and the parents are incapable of or prevented from doing it. Must Catholic children be left to lose their religion, or grow up in ignorance of it, and perish for the want of spiritual food? In a small community of Catholics the nearest priest would undoubtedly have to see to it that Catholic children learn their catechism and be prepared for the Sacraments; but since a priest is often overworked on Sundays, does not the divine precept, which makes it a crime to let our neighbor starve for want of food, compel those that are able to do so, to gather around them at stated times the little ones of their neighborhood and teach them the rudiments of their holy religion? We should judge of those that are in serious danger of losing their religion and their souls, as we have of those who are in great danger of death through want of food, clothing or shelter, or are in any serious danger of grave bodily sufferings; with this distinction, that as the supernatural life of the soul exceeds far in worth the natural life of the body, so likewise the obligation of helping our neighbor in his spiritual need is far more binding and imposes greater sacrifices.

3. To counsel the doubtful. This regards mainly the counsel to be given to those who doubt in matters purely spiritual and in particular cases, e. g., by indicating to them the means to flee the proximate occasion of sin, whether persons, places or things, by directing them in the way of perfection; by counseling them in the choice of a state of life; or by directing those that live in enmity with their fellow-men, by advising their reconciliation and by proposing the means towards it.

The duty of counseling the doubtful belongs to all, but primarily to priests and confessors. All God-fearing Christians should have a director, for holiness cannot be learned without a teacher. There are besides many circumstances in which one is in doubt how to act properly, and this difficulty is increased by the artifice and deceit of the devil.

If there is a duty to counsel those in doubt in matters ap-

pertaining to the salvation of souls and advancement in spiritual life or in holiness, there is also a correlative duty to have recourse to a zealous, learned and experienced director for advice, when anyone is in doubt concerning his spiritual welfare. This is a matter of great importance and too often neglected.

4. To comfort the sorrowful. This is a delicate work of spiritual mercy, and to be effective in assuaging the heartfelt pain which a serious loss has occasioned, it must come from a compassionate heart. Two things are necessary to bring real consolation to a sorrow-stricken neighbor: a sincere love for that neighbor and an ardent love of God. Conventual visits, stereotyped phrases of condolement seldom bring relief, and often aggravate the sufferings, because the compassion is not always sincere. In order to encourage and animate the sorrowful neighbor to bear his severe trial patiently, as a Christian should endeavor to do, we must undertake the task with true zeal for God's honor and glory. A true consoler must also be ready to help the sufferer, and to suggest means for the alleviation of his sorrows. Above all, the sorrowful should be reminded that "blessed are those that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

5. To bear wrongs patiently. By this we understand that we should, as Christ has taught us by word and example, bear with patience all evil unjustly done to us, and accept it with the greatest resignation.

Conformity to the will of God is the proof of our charity or perfect love of God. Trials may come to us as a consequence of our imprudence, of our neglect, or of our sinful deeds, or through the elements, such as heat and cold, or may come to us by the direct will of God to purify us or to try our constancy, such as sickness, painful accidents, unexpected losses; or finally, they may be inflicted by the ill-will of our neighbor. In all such trials, intended or permitted by God, the true and perfect Christian recognizes the hand of his heavenly Father, and, therefore, accepts them, willingly and gratefully, imitating in this the love of the Saviour, Who, when foreseeing all the sufferings and ignominies of His passion, then near at hand, concluded His prayer to His heavenly Father in a spirit of perfect resignation: "Not as I will but as Thou wilt." The wrongs done to us by our neighbor are especially mentioned among the trials to which we may subjected, because they are the hardest to bear with patience and in a spirit of resignation, particularly so when the wrongs are done intentionally, as we shall see presently.

6. To forgive all injuries. In this spiritual work of mercy is found the heroism of perfect charity, and there is none greater among mortals except martyrdom, i. e., the shedding of one's blood for the love of God and of our neighbor. In it we recognize a resemblance to that perfect charity of which only a God-

Man is capable, viz., to love with that degree of sublimity that made Him lay down His life and shed the last drop of His blood, without expectation or hope of increasing the felicity He enjoys as God from all eternity and in which as man He could share as He willed.

Are we bound to forgive all injuries done us? Most certainly, and we must go farther, for we must even love the enemy that injured us. Hear Our Lord Who has never commanded but what He practiced first: "You have heard that it hath been said: thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you." (Mat. v. 5, 43, 44). From this we learn that no matter how great the offense may be, as Christians, we are bound to forgive from our heart and not merely by outward signs. It is not enough to say: "I wish my enemy no harm, but I cannot forgive him"; or, "I forgive, but I cannot forget." All such expressions, which manifest that the offense has wounded the heart deeply and that the wound is not healed, clearly indicate that the forgiveness is neither sincere nor complete.

How can anyone so ill-disposed towards an enemy pray: "Our Father Who art in heaven . . . . Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Is it not a mockery? Does he not call down on himself the anger of God instead of His forgiveness and His blessing?

Must we understand that we are bound under pain of mortal sin to do more for an enemy than for a friend? Certainly not, but we are forbidden to avenge ourselves, to bear hatred, ill-will, or bitterness against him; to speak evil of him, to rejoice in his misfortune, to exclude him from our prayers and to refuse him the ordinary marks of civility.

There are three degrees in the love for our enemies: the first is obligatory and is the one we just explained, viz., to forgive from the heart without resentment or bitterness; the second is to pray for them, but this is only highly recommended, although we cannot exclude them from our prayers; David,

St. Stephen and Our Blessed Lord on the cross are beautiful examples of this noble act of mercy; and the third or heroic degree consists in doing all the good we can to an enemy, as Our Lord taught us by word and example. This is truly heroic and not superhuman, but with the grace of God it is possible; for it is recommended by our Saviour, and His whole life from the crib to the cross exemplified this particular recommendation, and after Him, it is praised by the Fathers of the Church and highly recommended and practiced by the saints. If it is difficult, it becomes thereby more meritorious; therefore, after teaching us to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us and to pray for them that persecute us, the good Saviour adds: "that ye may be the children of your Father Who is in heaven" (Mat. v. 45). Is the certainty of being or becoming a child of God not worth the sacrifice of our feelings, of our self-will and of our pride?

7. To pray for the living and the dead. For whom must we pray? For all people without exception, who are called like ouselves to the same reward with God in heaven and, therefore, the souls in Purgatory are also included. Hence our Master has taught us to begin the best of all prayers with the words, "Our Father," indicating by this that we should pray in the name of all our brethren on earth, so that all may benefit by our prayers.

It is especially a work of mercy to pray for sinners, for obstinate schismatics, heretics and infidels, for those who are about to die, and for the souls in Purgatory, because all these are in great need of our prayers.

To pray for the living and the dead is not always a work of mercy merely recommended, but may besides be a duty. It is a duty to pray for those we have injured in their goods or their honor, if it is beyond our means to repair the damage done; it is the obligation of children to pray for their parents and for parents to pray for their children; likewise husband and wife must pray for each other, and children of the same family are bound to pray for one another; it is a duty for superiors to pray for those under their charge and vice versa, especially, if that charge is a spiritual one; it is a duty of gratitude to pray for our benefactors; and it is finally a duty to pray for all the members of the mystical body of Christ, the Church; for by the Communion of Saints, we are all members of that mystical union existing between all those of the same faith, of which the God-Man is the Head and the Heart. All spiritual life comes from Him, and from Him are derived the channels

of grace, which convey—as our veins carry the blood to every part of our body—the supernatural life from the inexhaustible fountain in His adorable Heart. Hence, as members of the same Christian family we owe each other a prayer of love as well as one of mercy. (Cf. No. 303, sq.).

LESSON THE TWENTIETH

ON THE MANNER OF MAKING A GOOD CONFESSION.

224. What should we do on entering the confessional?

On entering the confessional we should kneel, make the sign of the cross, and say to the priest: "Bless me, Father," and then add: "I confess to almighty God and to you, Father, that I have sinned."

It must not be understood that there is any obligation to use the form of words given in this answer. It is certainly to be recommended that the penitent kneel and make the sign of the cross, for by kneeling he shows his humility at the feet of Christ's representative. Likewise, pious people before beginning any work of importance, first make the sign of the cross to obtain the help of God, and offer it to Him. It is, therefore, proper that the confession of sin, which brings back spiritual life, if it was lost, or increases it if it was not, should begin with the salutary sign of our redemption through Christ. The sign of the cross, as we shall learn, puts the devil to flight and strengthens us against temptation: two things very useful to make a good and sincere confession.

It is well also that he who is about to begin his confession, should say to the priest: "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned," for by this he prepares his soul for the priest's blessing: "May the Lord be in thy heart and on thy lips that thou mayest duly confess all thy sins." The pious penitent may answer, "Amen," and begin his confession immediately, or he may, as the

catechism recommends, add: "I confess to Almighty God and to you, Father, that I have sinned."

225. What are the first things that we should tell the priest in confession?

The first things we should tell the priest in confession are the time of our last confession, and whether we said the penance and went to Holy Communion.

There is nothing to be gained by making our confessions long and difficult, and this remark regards especially little children. To confess well is an art and must be learned like all arts by frequent practice. We should above all distinguish between what is essential and what is only recommended. The penitent who confesses but seldom, say once or twice a year, should follow the rule laid down in the answer; for otherwise the confessor will probably have to ask him, when he confessed last and whether he complied with his penance, whether he received absolution and went to Holy Communion. If the penitent has omitted one or more annual confessions and Easter communions, he is bound to confess it; and, therefore, such a one must state the time of his last confession or the number of times he failed to make his annual confession and Easter Communion. If he failed to comply with his penance and had to accuse himself of a mortal sin, he is bound under pain of mortal sin to declare his neglect in not fulfilling his penance. Finally, if anyone has been refused absolution, the fact should be made known to the priest, so that the confessor may properly understand his penitent's spiritual state. As for people who frequently go to confession, there is no obligation to do anything more than confess their mortal sins and such venial sins as they wish to confess. It is to be supposed that they have received absolution and complied with all other duties, even if they do not declare it. Still, in order to facilitate the confession, it is well to declare the time of one's last confession, by saying:

"My last worthy confession, was so many weeks or days ago; I went so many times to Holy Communion."

Since priests in charge of parishes have generally other arduous duties to attend to on confession days, and since a rule should be made for all penitents indiscriminately, it is advisable that the general confession, called the "Confiteor," should be omitted in the confessional; but it is highly recommendable that the "Confiteor" as well as the act of contrition precede the entrance into the confessional.

226. After telling the time of our last confession and communion what should we do?

After telling the time of our last confession and Communion, we should confess all the mortal sins we have committed, and all the venial sins we may wish to mention.

As we have fully explained in the last number, penitents who go to confession but two or three times in a year, and besides lead careless lives, should declare the time of their last confession and whether they received absolution, complied with their penance and went to Holy Communion. Moreover, if the priest has enjoined upon them the obligation to avoid certain occasions of sin, they must also declare their negligence, if in this they have been careless.

For those who frequently approach the Sacraments it is advisable to declare nothing more than the time of their last confession; but they may add the number of times they went to Holy Communion, and then begin immediately the declaration of their sins.

Should any order be observed in the confession of sins? No order is strictly required, but it is usually recommended to follow the order that was observed in the examination of conscience; but if no particular order in the examination has been observed, then it is advisable to begin with the most grievous mortal sins and end with the venial sins one wishes to confess. The recommendation in the former supposition has for object to guard against confusion and forgetfulness, and

in the latter, to guard against the temptations of the evil one, who tries to instill false shame into the penitent's mind, and to prevent him from declaring his sins with earnestness and candor.

227. What must we do when the confessor asks us questions?

When the confessor asks us questions, we must answer them truthfully and clearly. If all penitents were sufficiently instructed, truly candid, well disposed, of an excellent memory and of a sufficient presence of mind, there would be no reason for asking any questions, but alas! how few know what the integrity of confession means, for we have learned that a penitent is obliged to confess all his mortal sins, committed since his last worthy confession, together with all forgotten mortal sins, and besides, their number and species, and such circumstances as either change sin from mortal to venial, and vice versa, or make of one sinful act several mortal sins.. In matters of stealing or injury done to a neighbor, the confessor may be bound to inquire whether there were any accomplices, abettors or accessories, in order to determine the penitent's share in making restitution or reparation. Again, the priest in the tribunal of reconciliation is not only a judge but a physician and teacher; for he must heal his penitent's spiritual diseases, as far as he is able, and prescribe proper remedies; and if he knows his penitent to be insufficiently instructed in matters relating to the salvation of his soul, it is his duty to enlighten him.

228. What should we do after telling our sins?

After telling our sins we should listen with attention to the advice, which the confessor may think proper to give.

We have a right to expect that whoever goes to confession, does so with the intention not only to have his sins forgiven, but also to amend his life. With such a

disposition, he will, to be true to himself, be anxious to hear from his confessor—called by the Fathers another Christ—and the physician of his soul, whatever may tend to his spiritual welfare and save him from a relapse. The priest is likewise a friend and a father, who can compassionate his penitent's misery, being himself subject to the same trials and temptations; hence whatever advice he gives, comes from a friendly and fatherly heart.

229. How should we end our confession?

We should end our confession by saying, "I also accuse myself of all the sins of my past life," telling if we choose one or several of our past sins.

This recommendation of the catechism has a double purpose: one to lead us to declare once more our past sins, so that they may again be submitted to the power of the keys; the second, to guard against the danger of an insufficient contrition or of a firm purpose of amendment.

Whilst the first purpose is self-evident, the second purpose will be seen to be very important for people who have not been guilty of a mortal sin since their last confession and who have to confess over and over again the same venial sins. In such a case, unless the penitent be well instructed, there may be danger of a lack of contrition or of a firm purpose of amendment, and to guard against this defect, it is advisable that the penitent confess some mortal sin of his past life, or if he have never been guilty of a grievous sin, that he confess one particular venial sin, although already confessed, for which he has a sincere sorrow. (Cf. No. 199 at 4).

230. What should we do while the priest is giving us absolution?

While the priest is giving us absolution, we should from our heart renew the act of contrition.

Mark that the catechism says "renew" the act of contrition, for penitents should have excited in their heart a sincere sorrow for their sins immediately after the examination of conscience, or at least before they entered the confessional. If after the examination of conscience the penitent has to wait any length of time before his turn comes for confession, he should occupy his mind with such considerations as will inspire him and fill his soul with a horror and detestation of his sins and with a firm purpose of amendment: besides, he should not enter the confessional before endeavoring to detest sin more than any other evil. He should also strive to attain a perfect contrition, although an imperfect contrition is sufficient.

No one should rely upon the act of contrition to be made after the declaration of his sins to the priest; for the priest may take it for granted that he is already contrite, and if there are many people waiting, may pronounce the words of absolution before the penitent has time to gather his thoughts together and make a proper act of contrition. The absolution supposes the penitent to be already contrite and otherwise well disposed; and therefore the act of contrition should precede the words: "I absolve thee." Contrition felt after the absolution has been given is not an integral part of the Sacrament: it comes too late, if the sentence has been pronounced.

Nevertheless it is advisable to renew the act of contrition at the solemn moment when the sinner is restored to spiritual life and the friendship of God and when the whole court of heaven rejoices over a prodigal son doing penance.

LESSON THE TWENTY-FIRST

ON INDULGENCES

231. What is an indulgence?

An indulgence is a remission in whole or in part of the temporal punishment due to sin.

The doctrine on indulgences has become a never-ending source of misunderstanding and recriminations on the part of heretics, ever since Luther found in it an occasion or excuse for his revolt against the Church of Rome. Luther cannot be credited with the invention of the heresy: John Wickliff and the Waldenses had broached the sufficiency of faith alone and denied the efficacy of indulgences before him.

The occasion of Luther's rebellion is well known. In 1517 Pope Leo X, desirous of completing the noble edifice of St. Peter's in Rome, asked the faithful Catholics throughout the world to contribute towards the pious end in view, and to promote it further, he proclaimed an indulgence. Albert, the Archbishop of Mayence (Mainz) confided the preaching of the indulgence in the country of Saxony to a certain Tetzel and his colleagues of the Dominican Order. This choice offended the Augustinian Monk, Luther, and when towards the end of 1517 the people flocked from all parts of the country to hear the famous orators, Luther, then a professor at Wittenburg, preached against what he called the abuses of indulgences, and later on asserted that faith in Christ was sufficient to cancel all punishment for sin. Calvin in Switzerland, John Knox in Scotland and all their followers among English and American Protestants have likewise denied the efficacy of indulgences.

Among the articles preached by John Wickliff and condemned by the Council of Constance (Sess. 8), we find one, the fortieth, which reads as follows: "It is foolish to put faith in the Popes' and the bishops' indulgences," and the Sacred Council condemned it as heretical and erroneous, as censured by the holy Fathers, as scandalous, as blasphemous and as offensive to pious ears.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 25) has likewise condemned those who declare that indulgences are useless, or deny that Christ has given to the Church the power of granting indulgences.

The first important question before us is: what is meant by an indulgence? It is, says the Catechism, the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin. It is then not a direct forgiveness of the guilt of sin, for

all sin and its stain or guilt are remitted in the tribunal of penance, or if the sins are only venial, their guilt can be washed away in many other ways, as we have seen. But how can an indulgence benefit us? We have learned that although mortal sin may be forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance as to its guilt and as to the eternal punishment due to it, nevertheless there often remains some temporal punishment to be remitted in this or in the next world. Therefore a priest gives a penance to his penitent; therefore also we are recommended to do penance during our lives for sins already forgiven. In the beginning of the Church, when faith was strong, severe penances lasting sometimes months and years were imposed by the Church for some graver sins, but always according to established rules, and these penances were therefore called "canonical." In the course of time the Church became more indulgent, as we see by the decrees of the Council of Ancyra, of the Second Council of Laodicea and of the Fourth of Carthage. In the second and third centuries indulgences or a relaxation of the canonical punishments were often granted at the request of martyrs, who were about to sacrifice their lives for the faith, and in this manner these heroes shared, as it were, their superabundant satisfaction with their brethren in the faith, for we can satisfy for others as well as for ourselves. Indulgences cannot be said to be a useless practice, when St. Paul in the name of Christ was indulgent to the incestuous Corinthian (2 Cor. ii. 10). The Church cannot err or fail in matters practiced at all times with her consent. In the person of St. Peter she received infallibility: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." (Luke xxii. 32).

232. Is an indulgence a pardon of sin or a license to commit sin?

An indulgence is not a pardon of sin or a license to commit sin, and one who is in the state of mortal sin cannot gain an indulgence.

The Church teaches that the good works of a person in mortal sin are not meritorious for heaven, and that neither by grant nor by promise is God bound to look with favor upon such works, no matter how good, when they are performed in the state of mortal sin. They cannot merit conversion or any grace that may lead to it, and much less can they forgive any mortal or venial sin. Furthermore, as we shall see in the next number, an indulgence does not directly forgive the guilt of a venial sin, although the pious practice connected with an indulgence may lead to forgiveness.

It is then a pure invention, a low and base calumny to assert that Catholics teach or believe that an indulgence is a pardon of sin or a license to commit sin. Alms to the poor or donations for some pious object are sometimes imposed as conditions for gaining an indulgence, but purely pious and charitable works should not scandalize anyone, even if the good example of the virtuous and charitably inclined are not able to induce them to do likewise. If there have been abuses on the occasion of indulgences, as when we read of the "questors" or alms-gatherers who appropriated for their own use the alms collected by them, or received alms for purposes not purely religious or charitable, the Church cannot be blamed; for such abuses have always been repressed and severily punished when found to exist. All abuses have certainly ceased to exist for the last three centuries, so that we may conclude by asserting with Reinhart, although a Protestant, that "all Papal Bulls, issued concerning indulgences, require for condition that he who seeks to gain an indulgence must confess his sins, deplore them and undergo a penance." (Reinhart, p. 277).

233. How many kinds of indulgences are there?

There are two kinds of indulgences: plenary and partial.

Indulgences considered in their effects are only of two kinds: plenary, when all punishment due to sin may be remitted by the indulgence, and partial, when only a part of the punishment can be remitted by it.

With regard to the application of indulgences, they may be applicable to both the living and the dead, or to the living only; if applicable to the dead or souls in Purgatory, it is evident that since the holy souls are not

subjects of the Pope, the head of the Church, his jurisdiction does not extend over them, and therefore he cannot directly by an indulgence remit the punishment due to their sins; but we can help them by our prayers and good works and in some manner satisfy for their sins. Our indulgences then can be offered to God only by way of suffrage or supplication for the departed souls, but we hope and trust that God will kindly receive our petitions, and in His mercy and love for the poor souls, will alleviate their sufferings or shorten their time of imprisonment.

Following Abelly, a French theologian, we give the following example as an illustration. Let us suppose that the Governor of the State of California wished to pardon two brothers, his subjects, both imprisoned for the misappropriation of entrusted funds, but one legally detained in his own state and the other in the Federal District, Washington. If the former repaired by himself or through others all the injustice done by both, the Governor of his state has the best of right to pardon him; but the case is different with the latter culprit, over whom only the President of the United States has jurisdiction. What can be done? The Governor can petition the President to free him, and, offering satisfaction for his subject's indebtedness, he can try to obtain by supplication what he cannot do by his own authority.

234. What is a plenary indulgence?

A plenary indulgence is the full remission of the temporal punishment due to sin.

By this simple answer we are taught that notwithstanding the enormity of our indebtedness to God for our sins, even for mortal sins already forgiven, if we gain one single plenary indulgence, all the temporal punishment due to our sins is remitted, so that in case one should die immediately after gaining a plenary indulgence, he would not have to pass through Purgatory to make any further satisfaction.

It is clear that the Supreme Head of the Church alone can grant a plenary indulgence, for to Peter and his successors alone did Christ give that power when He said: " I will give thee the keys to the kingdom of

heaven . . . . whatever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." (Mat. xvi. 19). This power has never been delegated to anyone by the Sovereign Pontiff: it is inherent in the supreme authority of the Church and he has strictly reserved it to himself.

St. Thomas (Supp., q. 25, a. 2) speaking of the validity of an indulgence, says: "It must be said that indulgences are simply worth what they are proclaimed to be, provided that on the part of the giver there be authority, on the part of the recipient there be charity and on the part of the cause there be piety, which includes the honor of God, and the spiritual welfare of the members of the Church." In other words, we are taught that, if the Holy Father proclaims a plenary indulgence, it is plenary; if he or one that has been delegated thereto by him, proclaims a partial indulgence, it is partial; but there are three provisos: 1st, he that proclaims the indulgence must not exceed his power, but since the Holy Father alone proclaims plenary indulgences and he has full authority to do so, we need not insist further on this point. 2nd. On the part of the recipient there must be charity. By charity is not meant here the virtue of charity, or an act of charity, but the state of charity or sanctifying grace; i. e., no indulgence can be gained unless one be in the state of sanctifying grace or free from mortal sin. Hence, the recipient must also be baptized. Venial sin does not prevent anyone from gaining a plenary indulgence, except as we will remark hereafter. We shall explain this condition more fully in number 237.

A plenary indulgence to be fully and absolutely plenary must leave the recipient, if he desires to gain it for himself, free from the guilt of all sin, even of venial sin; for as long as there is the least stain of sin, there remains some punishment attached to it. Now an indulgence does not forgive sin, how then can anyone gain a plenary indulgence? A plenary indulgence does not directly forgive venial sins, but confession, acts of contrition and of love of God, public and private devotions and other good and pious works, such as almsgiving or other works of mercy or charity, which accompany the exercises of a solmenly proclaimed indulgence, do forgive venial sins, and the indulgence does the rest. Only such venial sins as we do not detest or deplore, are obstacles to a full remission of the temporal punishment due to our sins, and that hindrance exists if the recipient has an affection, a liking or a wilful inclination for a venial sin: e. g., when one loves to lie, to deceive others, even if he tells untruths to please his hearers or to jest. As long as he deceives or tries to deceive, there is sin. Such a one could not obtain a full remission of all his sins and of

their punishment, unless he decides to amend his ways. Happily, if one for some slight cause cannot obtain a full, entire and complete remission, his labor is not lost; he will receive as much as he is able to receive, according to his more or less perfect disposition.

We should add also that to gain a plenary indulgence —and this is applicable also to partial indulgences—the recipient must comply with all the conditions of the indulgence as to time, manner or place. Since all the Holy Father's rescripts or bulls that accompany the proclamation of a plenary indulgence, always clearly state the conditions for gaining it, there is no necessity for further explanation.

3rd. The cause or reason for granting an indulgence must be good, i. e., it must tend to the honor of God or to the spiritual welfare of souls. It is not for us to inquire into the reasons for which the Holy Father grants plenary indulgences; besides, his object is usually stated in the proclamation.

As to partial indulgences, there is always sufficient reason for them, if they tend to increase individual piety and stimulate devotion.

235. What is a partial indulgence?

A partial indulgence is the remission of a part of the temporal punishment due to sin.

By this answer is not meant that a partial indulgence remits a third, fifth or tenth of the punishment due to our sins, or that it never forgives all punishment; but it is simply meant that whereas a plenary indulgence, if it be gained as intended by the Holy Father, cancels all our indebtedness, a partial indulgence cancels only a certain amount of the indebtedness; but the amount gained may be sufficient, or more than sufficient, to pay all that is owing. An example from daily life will clearly explain this. The prodigal son of a wealthy father squanders all his possessions and besides contracts certain debts. His indulgent father, upon hearing it, sends him a blank check duly signed for his son to fill in with the amount he owes, no matter what may be the sum. This blank check is similar to a plenary indulgence. But suppose the prodigal owed debts of $2000 and the father sent $1500, or $2000, or $2200; then the first sum would leave a debt unpaid of $500, the second would pay the whole debt like a plenary indulgence, and the last sum would leave a surplus of $200 in the son's favor. Now, all these sums are like partial indulgences, because the amount is deter-

mined. There may be saintly persons, who by their good works pay more than they owe as punishment for their sins, and they can devote their surplus or superabundant merit to the credit of someone else on earth, or offer it to God for the souls in Purgatory.

Does it follow from this that the saint who has no debt to pay to the just God, will reap no benefit from gaining a partial or plenary indulgence? God will certainly compensate him by special graces for what others receive towards the remission of their punishment, or he may give his surplus credit to be applied to the debts of relatives or friends or offer it to God as a suffrage for the suffering souls.

Partial indulgences are generally given in the form of indulgences of days, quadragenes or quarantines and years, e. g., an indulgence of forty, one hundred, or three hundred days; of one to seven years, of seven years and seven quadragenes, etc. And what is understood by all that? Let us remember that originally an indulgence was a shortening of the long canonical punishments imposed by the Church for some grievous sins, like idolatry, murder, adultery, etc.; thus for some very detestable sins, years of penance were often imposed, and for lesser sins, only forty days, or a quadragene, equivalent to the forty days of Lent. This apportionment was all made according to statutes or established ecclesiastical rules. Now, the exemplary piety of some of the penitents, or a martyr's intercession or some great solemnity, often induced the ecclesiastical authorities to shorten the time of the penance by days, quadragenes or years. Hence when the Church grants a partial indulgence, she grants a remission of so much of the temporal punishment due to our sins, as would have been obtained by fasting on bread and water the same number of days, lents and years by the penitents of the early Church. (See St. Alph. Ligorio L. 6, Tr. 4, No. 535). The merit of those penances can be determined only by the all-just and all-knowing God; but it is evident that partial indulgences are a great boon for the Catholics of our days, who love ease and comfort and would shrink from the public humiliations and penances imposed upon public sinners in the ages of faith. (Cf.

St. Thos. Supp., q. 28, a. 3) (See also list of Canonical Penances in St. Alph. Liguori. L. vi, Tr. 4, No. 530).

Who can grant partial indulgences? Only the Pope and some of the authorities of the Church. The Pope has unlimited power, by the inherent right of his office, to grant them throughout the whole Church. Bishops have the power to give forty days indulgence, but only within the limits of their dioceses. On the occasion of the dedication of a church, they can grant one year; archbishops have the same power throughout their provinces; cardinals can give one hundred days in their particular churches, and also in their dioceses, if they have any. But all this power is subject to and depends on the head of the Church, and the indulgences granted by these prelates are not applicable to the souls in purgatory.

237. What must we do to gain an indulgence?

To gain an indulgence we must be in a state of grace and perform the works enjoined.

It is certain that our good works and devotions have no condign or strictly deserved merit attached to them, nor is any condign satisfaction for sin due them, unless they be done in the state of grace. How can anyone claim the right to gain favor from God, if he is in open revolt against Him, i. e., if he is in the state of mortal sin? Hence we cannot gain an indulgence for ourseves, unless we be in the state of grace. The case may be different with indulgences applicable to the souls in Purgatory, because all indulgences, offered to God for them, depend entirely on His merciful acceptance; for the Church can apply indulgences to them only in the form of suffrages or intercessions.

The state of grace is required at least when one complies with the last condition of an indulgence. To elucidate this point, let us suppose that the conditions for gaining a plenary indulgence are: confession, communion and seven visits to a church. It is sufficient if one first visits the church seven times, and then makes a good confession and communion; but should he first go to confession and communion and afterwards commit a mortal sin before he makes his seventh and last visit, he would not gain the indulgence. Still, it is more

salutary to go first to confession and then make the visits before or after communion; but should the would-be recipient of the indulgence fall into mortal sin before his last visit, he must go to confession again before he completes the required number of visits.

It is also plain that one should have a virtual intention of gaining the indulgence, at least in a general manner; but it is not required that he have a perfect knowledge of the nature of the indulgence and all its possible advantages. Hence, if one proposes simply to gain what the Church offers as a spiritual favor, or if he simply desires to receive a remission of the punishment due to his sins, it is quite sufficient. Anyone well-disposed will easily acquire sufficient knowledge and proper intention to gain a plenary indulgence, if he attend the instructions usually given at parish churches on the occasion of a solemnly proclaimed plenary indulgence, such as a jubilee.

Remarks. 1st. When confession is required for any indulgence, it is always allowed to receive that sacrament on the evening preceding the day of the indulgence. Moreover, our Holy Father Pope Pius X, in his decree on Holy Communion and in subsequent decrees relating thereto, proclaimed that whenever confession and absolution are required, weekly confessions and bi-monthly confessions, and even, for some good reasons, confessions delayed for three weeks, are sufficient to gain all the ordinary indulgences whether partial or plenary. This ruling applies to all standing indulgences, but not to extraordinary indulgences proclaimed by the Sovereign Pontiff for some special and grave reason, nor to jubilees.

Pius IX decreed in 1870 that even Holy Communion may be received the day preceding the day of indulgence, but the recipient of both Sacraments should have at that time the intention to gain the indulgence and to fulfill the conditions prescribed.

2nd. From the decree of the S. C. of the Index of Jan. 25, 1842, it seems plain that though members of certain sodalities, like the confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament, of the Apostleship of Prayer, of the Holy Names, the Sodality of the Children of Mary, etc., have not always complied with the statutes, they are not debarred, therefore, from gaining the indulgences attached to their membership, provided they comply with the pious works enjoined, and have the proper intention. Hence, it is very advisable to renew before daily Communion the intention of gaining all possible indulgences, especially for those who belong to many sodalities or confraternities; and as to partial indulgences, the intention of gaining them should be made at least every morning.

3rd. Priests who have special privileges, e. g., to grant to their penitents a plenary indulgence three times a year, should not forget to announce it to their penitents; and the latter will do well to beg the favor at stated times, as a confessor may not know whether he has or has not granted the indulgence already to this or that particular penitent.

4th. If in the place where the confessor resides there are several of his penitents who belong to the Third Order of St. Francis or of St. Dominic, etc., it is advisable that the confessor become a member of the Order, for it imposes no new obligations or burdens, and it empowers him to use in favor of tertiary penitents the privilege, which the confessor as a member enjoys, viz., to give the special absolution with a plenary indulgence after confession. (Cf. Appendix—Indulgences).

5th. Whenever one of the conditions of an indulgence is a visit to a church or chapel, or some other condition that cannot be observed on account of sickness or old age, it is left to the discretion of the confessor to substitute for these conditions some other pious work.

6th. One can gain several plenary indulgences on the same day if (a) it is so stated in the concession; (b) if the titles or reasons of gaining them are different, e. g., in case one belongs to several confraternities and the indulgences granted to the members fall on the same day, and provided the pious works enjoined cannot be or usually are not repeated, like confessions and communions; but all other requisites for each indulgence must be complied with.

Note. An explanation of special indulgences attached to prayers or to objects, viz., stations of the cross, crucifixes, rosaries, scapulars, etc., will be found among the appendixes.

The Holy Eucharist

INTRODUCTION

The holy Eucharist is the most excellent of all the Sacraments: all give grace, but in this we receive the Author of all grace; to it all other Sacraments necessarily tend as to their object and final end. All other Sacraments were instituted to prepare the soul for the reception of it, or to remove the obstacles to its efficacy. This fact becomes clear when we consider that what is noblest in man and what leads to his eternal destiny in the world to come, is the supernatural life of the soul. It begins in Baptism; it is strengthened in Confirmation; it is maintained and nourished, perfected and completed in the Source of all supernatural life, Christ, the Saviour. Baptism,

Penance and Extreme Unction remove the obstacles to the intimate union of the soul with this Divine sourse. Matrimony enables married people to preserve the supernatural life, and to procure it for their offspring. Through Holy Orders God sends to man His chosen ministers as dispensers of the life-giving grace through the Sacraments. But the Holy Eucharist is life itself. That explains also why the Holy Eucharist was given as a sacrament and a sacrifice: a sacrifice instituted by our Lord Himself for all the shortcomings of man, and a Sacrament for an intimate union with Christ our Head, a union to begin here on earth and to be consummated in heayen.

After Baptism, and as long as we remain in the state of sanctifying grace, we are, it is true, already members of the mystical body of Christ and we live the life of grace; but that life is perfected and completed in this intimate union with the Head and the Heart of Christ, the inestimable Source of all supernatural life in the soul.

We shall first consider the Holy Eucharist as a Sacrament.

238. What is the Holy Eucharist?

The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament which contains the body and blood, soul and divinity, of Our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

The Holy Eucharist is a sacrament and as such, there must be found in it three things: an outward sign, inward grace, and institution by Christ. We have also stated in the lesson on the sacraments in general (No. 136), that the outward sign of the sacrament signifies and determines the grace they bestow, and that they produce their effects by the inherent power attached to those outward signs by the Saviour, provided the recipient place no obstacle to their efficacy.

We will follow the order of the questions in the catchism pertaining to this august Sacrament, and we will first consider what all Catholics should know about its matter and form about what It contains, and what is required for Its reception. In the following questions we shall explain its institution by Christ and the circumstances thereof, and the more explicit doctrines flowing from it; and, lastly, the effects of this most excellent Sacrament in Holy Communion will engage our most earnest attention.

The catechism says that the Sacrament contains the body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Council of Trent (Sess. 13, can. 1) has condemned the contrary heretical teaching, as follows: "If anyone denies that the Sacrament of the most Holy

Eucharist contains truly, really and substantially the body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently Jesus Christ whole and entire, saying that He is only there as in a sign or in a figure, or by His power, let him be anathema."

By this we see clearly that the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist contains the true and real body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord, and it is not merely a sign or representation of His sacred body and blood, soul and divinity, without the reality. Christ could have instituted the Sacrament with bread and wine as a merely outward sign, or as a representation of an interior grace, that is, for a spiritual nourishment of our soul; but then the words of Christ, when He instituted the Sacrament, would not be true, for He said: "This is My body; this is My blood."

Christ in this Sacrament is not merely present by His grace, as in other sacraments, not merely by His power as He is rightly said to be everywhere by His divinity, by His omniscience and omnipotence; the Holy Eucharist contains substantially the body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord, and by that we mean that it is the same true and real body and blood, soul and divinity with which He ascended into heaven, the same body and blood, soul and divinity with which He sits at the right hand of God, His Father in heaven. Why do we not see His body and blood? Simply because His sacred body and blood after His resurrection have become spiritualized, that is, like a spirit, similar to what our bodies will be after the resurrection of the dead; and also, because the substance of His body and blood being present in the Holy Eucharist under the outward appearances of bread and wine, these are visible, but the substance of His body and blood is invisible; and finally because our Lord in the Holy Eucharist is miraculously present, and not in a natural manner, as we shall explain hereafter.

Let us add here for those whose mind is sufficiently developed, that in material things like our body, the air, water, stones, etc., and all other things that fall under our senses, we must distinguish their accidents from their substances: this all philosophers admit. Now the accidents of a thing are principally its dimension or extension, the color, the form or figure, the smell, the taste, heat or cold, liquidity, solidity or vaporability, transparency or opaqueness, hardness or softness, lightness or heaviness, etc. The substance of a thing is its nature or essence, to which its particular accidents belong. There are

many things which under the influence of heat and cold change in their accidents or appearances, as, for example, water becomes vapor by heat and ice by cold; withdraw the heat or cold and its form of water comes back. Metals become liquid by heat, and even are vaporized; let them cool off and they return to their original form. By this we see that things may undergo great transformations, without a change in their substances; but a substance cannot change without being converted into another substance or nature, just as the food we eat and the water we drink are converted into the blood, the bones, and the sinews of the body.

When we apply now what we just said about accidents and substances to the sacred body and blood of Our Lord, who will dare assert that He Who endowed existing matter with many accidents or alterations in their outward appearance without changing their substance, cannot change one substance into another without alteration in their accidents, and thus change, without, transformation in their outward appearance, the substance of bread and wine into the substance of His own body and blood, especially so, if he considers that substances are not only invisible to us in this life, but that their nature and the laws which govern them are unknown to us?

The catechism after saying that the Holy Eucharist contains the body and blood, soul and divinity of our Lord, adds: "under the appearance of bread and wine." From this we should not conclude that the appearance or the accidents of bread and wine belong to the body and blood of our Lord, as if Our Lord had assumed their outward appearances for His own body; no, the outward appearance of the bread and the wine only serve as a veil for Our Lord's presence, as we shall see presently; the substance of the bread and wine does not remain under their appearances, but in the Holy Eucharist their whole substance has been converted into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, and only the appearance of the bread and wine remains. Let us hear again the Council of Trent: "If anyone says that in the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of the bread and of the wine remains together with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, denying that admirable and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into His body, and of the whole substance of the wine into His blood, which leaves of the bread and wine only the appearance, a change which the Catholic Church has very conveniently called transsubstantiation, let him be anathema." (Sess. 13, Can. 2).

Having explained the meaning of the answer of the catechism, we must further consider the matter and form of the Sacrament.

The matter from which this Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is perfected is bread and wine: bread of wheat flour, and wine from the grape, i. e., fermented grape juice, which alone is truly called wine. For the validity of the Sacrament the bread may be leavened or unleavened, but the Church enjoins the use of the latter for the faithful of the Latin rite and the former for those of the Greek rite.

The wine for use in the Sacrament should be pure and clear, i. e., without any mixture of anything else, and free from sediment.

Wine should not be sour, for vinegar is not wine. Hence, it is forbidden to use wine that begins to sour, because it is difficult to tell when wine ceases in part to be wine and when it becomes vinegar. Sourness is an indication that some small quantity of the wine has become corrupted or that all the wine is tending towards corruption.

If the whole substance of the bread and wine is converted into the body and blood of Our Lord, in what does the Sacrament consist? The outward sign of the Sacrament consists in the appearance of the bread and wine: their appearance signifies the grace, the sacred nourishment, which is nothing less than the adorable body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ.

We shall now consider the form, or words, that convert the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.

The form is: "This is My body; this is the chalice of My blood." But the words, which the priest pronounces in the name of Christ, are transitory like the bread and the wine, and in the Sacrament nothing remains but the accidents of the bread and wine, which contain, as the catechism says, Our Lord whole and entire,, i. e., His body and blood, soul and divinity.

By this we see that the Holy Eucharist differs from the other Sacraments,

1) because in it the matter or form are both transitory, and although they are necessary to perfect the Sacrament, they are not a part of the Sacrament, when it has become a Sacrament and when it is given to the faithful or received by the priest.

2) The Holy Eucharist is a Sacrament as soon as the form

is applied to the matter from which the Sacrament is made, and thus it is a sacrament before it is received: it is a Sacrament in the ciborium kept in the tabernacle; it is a Sacrament with which the people are blessed at what is called "Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament."

3) It differ salso from the other sacraments, because in the Holy Eucharist we receive not only grace, but the Author and Source of all grace, Jesus our Saviour.

But the Church teaches that in the Holy Eucharist, although Christ is whole and entire under the form of bread, and whole and entire under the form of wine, there are not two sacraments, but one sacrament; how is this explained? It is very simple. As under the accidents of bread and wine, there is but one spiritual food, viz., the body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ, there can be but one sacrament. Our daily meals may consist of solid foods and of liquids, yet these two form only one meal. Hence the priest who, to purify the ciborium, sometimes consumes several hosts after having received Holy Communion under the form of bread and under the form of wine, receives only one Sacrament; and the people, who are admitted to the Holy Table under the form of bread only, receive the same supernatural food as the priest in the Mass, viz., Christ Jesus Our Lord, whole and entire, with His body and blood, His soul and divinity.

239. When did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist?

Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before He died.

From the answer to the preceding number we have learned that the Holy Eucharist contains the body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord, and that consequently Christ Himself must have instituted it; but the catechism teaches us that He instituted it at the Last Supper. When did the Last Supper take place? On the night of Judas' betrayal, as St. Paul has it (1 Cor. xi. 23), viz., the night before Christ's death. It was also the first day of the Azymes, when the Jewish people were not allowed the use of fermented bread,

and, therefore, in deference to what Jesus did, when instituting the Blessed Sacrament, the Catholic Church forbids leavened bread. The Greeks, in order to defend their custom of using leavened bread, hold that Christ anticipated the Jewish Pasch by one day, for they maintain that while the Pasch fell on Friday, Christ celebrated it on Thursday; to which Catholics answer that the Pasch began on Thursday evenings. However, as the Catholic Church teaches that the Sacrament is valid, whether it is effected with leavened or unleavened bread, and obliges the Greek Catholics to follow their tradition, and on the other hand, since the Greek bishops in the Council of Florence subscribed to the decrees that the consecration with unleavened bread is valid, there is no further advantage in proving that the Latin Catholics have the right tradition.

It was immediately after complying with the obligation of the Jewish feast, or the eating of the Paschal Lamb, that Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist in order that the figure might give way to the reality; for the Paschal Lamb was the figure of Christ slain on the cross, and so we call the Saviour the Lamb of God, of whom the lamb eaten by the Israelites in memory of their deliverance form Egyptian slavery, was but the figure or type. St. Thomas gives two reasons for the institution of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper: namely, because it was proper that the Saviour, when He was about to deprive His Apostles of His visible presence, should leave them the consolation of His real Presence in the Holy Eucharist; and also in order to impress upon them the dignity and excellence of the Sacrament, for the last will, the words of a great personage, of a father or of an intimate friend, are cherished and valued above all things he has ever said or done. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 73, a. 5).

240. Who were present when Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist?

When Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist the twelve Apostles were present.

The catechism in this number gives us the generally accepted fact that the twelve Apostles were present, and why? Because we learn not only the institution of the Blessed Sacrament from the narrative of the

Gospel, found in St. Matthew (xxvi. 25), in St. Mark (xiv. 22) and in St. Luke (xxii. 19), but likewise the institution of the priesthood. To the Apostles and their successors alone was given the power to perpetuate the Real Presence of Our Lord in this Sacrament throughout His Church until the consummation of the world. To the Apostles alone did Christ say: "Do this for a commemoration of me." To the Apostles alone, after the washing of feet and the institution of the Holy Eucharist, did the Saviour speak that wonderful discourse, replete with holy instruction for those who were to direct others in the way of salvation. (St. John, xiii-xvi).

Judas was not present during the discourse of Our Lord, (John xiii. 2-30) but he was present at the washing of the feet and at the institution of the Holy Eucharist, and it was only after his sacrilegious communion that the devil entered into him. (Ib. xiii. 18).

If we admit that Christ spoke twice of the betrayal of Judas, once before and once after the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, there is no difficulty in understanding the order of the events in the four Gospels. The order is as follows: the eating of the Paschal Lamb with all the Mosaic observances (Ex. xii); the eating of anything else prepared for the evening meal; the washing of the feet; the institution of the Holy Eucharist; and finally the admirable discourse of Our Lord. (Cf. A Lapide on John xiii. 21).

241. How did Our Lord institute the Holy Eucharist?

Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist by taking bread, blessing, breaking, and giving it to His Apostles, saying: "Take ye and eat. This is My body"; and then by taking the cup of wine, blessing and giving it, saying to them: "Drink ye all of this. This is My blood which shall be shed for the remission of sins. Do this for a commemoration of Me."

From this answer we learn the summary of the whole Catholic doctrine on the Blessed Sacrament and its perpetuation in the Church.

1. Christ first took bread and afterwards a cup of

wine into His hands: the bread and the wine are the matter from which the Sacrament is effected. In this respect, the Holy Eucharist differs from all the other Sacraments, and likewise because the matter in all the others constitute with the form, or outward sign, the essence of the Sacrament; in this Sacrament no bread or wine remains, and the form passes away with the consecration, through which the Sacrament is effected.

2. Jesus blessed the bread and the wine, probably by making the sign of the cross over them, a ceremony to indicate the excellency of the Holy Eucharist into which the bread and wine were to be converted, and also for the purpose of sanctifying the outward species which were to contain His body and blood, soul and divinity.

3. Our Lord broke the bread and gave it. By this is meant that Christ first broke the bread into twelve parts, and before offering it to the Apostles or whilst offering it, said: "Take ye and eat. This is My body."

It is very probable that at the Last Supper, the table was provided with small round loaves, still in use in Palestine, not more than five-eighths of an inch in thickness and about three and one-half inches in diameter. As unleavened bread had to be eaten at the Passover, it is presumed that there was no other bread on the table.

4. The same is to be said of the wine, except as to its division, for it is probable that Our Lord at the time He handed the cup to the Apostles, said: "Drink ye all of this. This is My blood which shall be shed for the remission of sins. Do this for a commemoration of Me." If we adopt the view of most authors that Christ handed to each of His Apostles, a small portion of the consecrated bread, as was the custom in several churches in the first century of the Christian era, there is no objection to that opinion, provided the words: "Take and eat. This is My body," are held to have been spoken before the first one of the Apostles received his portion. (Cf. A Lapide on Matt. xxvi. 26).

5. By the words "Do this for a commemoration of Me," Christ gave the Apostles and their successors, the priests and bishops of the Church, the power to do as He had done, i. e., to perpetuate the Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist until the consummation of the world.

We should add for a clearer understanding of all that happened at the Last Supper, the following: 1. Christ first ate the paschal lamb with His disciples, all standing, as was imposed by the Mosaic Law. 2. All reclined according to the custom of the country to take the usual supper. 3. Jesus washed the feet of His disciples. 4. Whilst all were again reclining at table, Jesus instituted the Blessed Sacrament. 5. Judas shortly after his sacrilegious communion, stealthily left the Cenacle. 6. Jesus delivered His memorable discourse. 7. Christ and the eleven went to Gethsemani where He was betrayed by Judas into the hands of the Jews.

242. What happened when Our Lord said: This is my Body; this is My blood?

When Our Lord said, "This is My body," the substance of the bread was changed into the substance of His body; and when He said, "This is My blood," the substance of the wine was changed into the substance of His blood.

In this and in the following numbers we have a compendium of the whole Catholic doctrine on the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and it is so well explained that but little, if anything, can be added to make it clearer.

The present question and answer teach us that when Christ, the omnipotent God, said, "This is My body," that which was bread till then was changed into the substance of His body. The word "this" could refer only to the substance, for nothing was changed in the outward appearance or the accidents of the bread: the extension, the form, the color, the taste, etc., of the bread remained the same. The marvel is contrary to all the laws of nature known to us, but it is the God of nature Who has spoken, and Who by a miracle can suspend His own laws.

When Our Lord said, "This is the cup or chalice of My blood," or what is equivalent, "This is My blood" —for a cup of water means simply water contained in a cup—by the omnipotent power of the God-Man, that which was wine till then was changed into the substance of His blood. Here again the word "this" refers to the substance and not the accidents of the wine, because no change occurred in them.

243. Is Jesus Christ whole and entire both under the form of bread and under the form of wine?

Jesus Christ is whole and entire both under the form of bread and under the form of wine.

Although the words, "this is My body; this is My blood," pronounced over what was bread and wine, effected directly the change of the bread into Christ's body and of the wine into His blood, nevertheless these words have also a concomitant effect, for as Christ is alive in the Holy Eucharist and cannot die any more, where His body is, there also must be His blood, His soul and His divinity; likewise the words "this is My blood," said over the wine directly caused the change of the substance of the wine into the substance of His blood, but by a necessary concomitance, where the blood of Christ is, there must be Christ whole and entire, viz., His body, blood, soul and divinity.

If St. Peter or one of the other Apostles had said Mass during the triduum intervening between Christ's death and His resurrection, the words "This is My body" would have brought under the appearance of bread the substance of Christ's body and by concomitance His divinity likewise; and the words, "This is My blood," would have effected the presence of Christ's blood under the form of wine and by concomitance His divinity also; but the soul of Christ would not have been present under either form or species, and the body, blood and soul would have been separated, for the soul of Christ was then in Limbo; His sacred blood, spilled for our salvation, had not yet been gathered by the angels, and His body was in the tomb.

244. Did anything remain of the bread and wine, after their substance had been changed into the substance of the body and blood of Our Lord?

After the substance of the bread and wine had been changed into the substance of the body and blood of Our Lord, there remained only the appearances of bread and wine.

Here we learn that after the substance of the bread and wine had been changed by Christ into the substance of His body and blood, the substance of the bread and wine did not remain, but only the accidents or appearances of the bread and wine. What became of the true substance of the bread and wine? Was it corrupted or annihilated? No; it was totally changed into the substance of the body and blood of Our Lord.

245. What do you mean by the appearances of bread and wine?

By the appearances of bread and wine I mean the figure, the color, the taste, and whatever appears to the senses. The accidents or appearances of the bread and wine remain even after consecration, and there is no difference in the species of the accidents before and after consecration; for the shape or form, the size, the taste, the color, the smell, the touch and sound—as when a host is broken—,etc., are identically the same before and after consecration. It would be erroneous to think that these outward appearances belong to our Saviour's body. What we see, feel, or taste, etc., in the Holy Eucharist is not the body or blood of our Lord; for, as we said before, these species serve only as a veil for the Real Presence, and as an outward sign of the intimate union of Christ with ourselves in Holy Communion. Just as bread and wine, if taken as food in a natural way, are converted into the substance of our body, likewise in a supernatural manner, our souls are, as it were, converted into Christ, so that it may

be said that we live not, but Christ lives in us; they denote also the principal effect of the Sacrament: the nourishing and perfecting of our souls, as our bodies are nourished and strengthened by natural food.

Since the accidents are not the outward appearance of Christ's body and blood, and since the substance of the bread and wine does not remain after consecration, we learn further that the accidents which fall under our senses do not adhere to any substance or subject. This fact is contrary to all the known laws of nature, but it is not impossible to the omnipotent God, Who created all things out of nothing, and Who changed water into wine in Cana, simply to avoid the embarrassment of the groom, when the wine failed at his wedding feast. Who understands the essential relation of accidents to their substance, save God and His angels to whom God has given a supernatural intellect to understand all the laws of nature and their connection? And even the angels, says St. Thomas, cannot see our Lord in this Sacrament by their natural power, but only by a supernatural and miraculous power, for Christ is not naturally present in the Eucharist, but in a miraculous and ineffable manner that surpasses all created understanding. Hence, if we had all the united knowledge of the angels, we could not without a miracle fully perceive the presence of the God-Man under the veil of the sacramental species. Therefore, with the Church, in the beautiful hymn composed by St. Thomas, we pray daily in our visits to the Blessed Sacrament: "I devoutly adore Thee, O concealed Divinity, truly hidden under these appearances. On the cross only Thy divinity was concealed, but here also Thy humanity; but I believe and confess them both, and ask only what the penitent thief asked for . . . My sight, my taste, my touch are deceived; to my hearing alone can I safely trust, and I believe what the Son of God hath said, for nothing can be surer than the word of Truth. Oh Jesus, Whom I now see veiled, I pray that which my soul so much thirsteth for, may happen; I pray that I may contemplate Thee, when once Thy face is revealed to me, and that I may find happiness in the sight of Thy glory."

246. What is this change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Our Lord called?

This change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Our Lord is called transubstantiation.

The word "transubstantiation" is very proper to designate the miraculous change or conversion that took place at the Last Supper when Our Lord converted the

substance of the bread and of the wine into the substance of His body and blood. It could not be called transformation, because there was no change in outward appearance after Christ had said "this is My body; this is My blood" over the bread and wine before Him. It could not be called transposition or translation, as if one substance had been removed to make place for another substance; for that is contrary to the Catholic doctrine on conversion of one substance into another. Or if by translating is meant that the substance of the body and blood of our Lord were transferred to the substance of the bread and wine, without any conversion or change in the bread and wine, it falls under the condemnation of the Council of Trent, which pronounced anathema on those, who like Carlstadt, Luther and their followers, maintained that the substance of the bread and wine remained together with the substance of the body and blood of Our Lord. "If anyone shall say, that in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, the substance of the bread and wine remains together with the body and blood of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." (Trent, Sess. 13, can. 4).

The conversion that took place at the Last Supper, as well as that which daily takes place in the Mass, viz., the conversion of one substance into another, is properly and suitably called transsubstantiation.

The Dogma of the Holy Eucharist Taught by Holy Scripture, by Tradition and the Decisions of Holy Church

1. The true, real and substantial presence of the body and blood of Our Lord in the Eucharist was promised by Our Lord, according to the famous sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel.

After the multiplication of the bread, by which several thousand people were fed, many of them sought Jesus again the next day and found Him at Capharnaum, near Lake Tiberias and there they asked a sign of Him, so that they might believe in Him. (John vi. 30). "Our fathers," they said, "did eat manna in the desert, as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" (Ib. 31). To this Jesus answered: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread

which I will give, is my flesh." At this the Jews said. "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" Then Jesus said to them: "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life: . . . For My flesh is meat indeed; and My blood is drink indeed." (Ib. 51-56). We learn that because of this hard saying, as Christ's hearers called it, some disciples were scandalized and ceased to follow Him; and when Jesus was alone with His twelve Apostles, He asked them: "Will you also go away?" And Simon Peter answered Him: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (Ib. 68, 69).

To these quotations no other explanation is necessary than this simple question: "Did Jesus mean what He said or not? If not, i. e., if He meant to convey something different from the obvious sense of His words, He owed His disciples an explanation or correction in order to rectify their misunderstanding. He has not done so, and hence His words must be taken in their strictly natural and obvious sense: hence Christ promised to give His body to eat and His blood to drink.

2. The promise of Christ was fulfilled when, at the Last Supper, according to the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke, He said over the bread and wine: This is My body, this is My blood. (Matt. xxvi. 25, Mark xiv. 22, Luke xxii. 19). In all these passages Christ speaks clearly of the eating of His body and the drinking of His blood. St. Luke, after the essential words: "This is My body," says that Christ added: "that shall be delivered up for you"; and Matthew, emphasizing the reality of Christ's blood, gives the following: "Drink ye all of this, for this is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins."

Let us now pass to the testimony of St. Paul, who received his doctrine directly from the Lord, as he assures us. (1 Cor. xi. 23). "I have received of the Lord . . . . that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks broke and said: 'Take ye and eat; this is My body, which shall be delivered for you; this do for the commemoration of Me.' In like manner also the chalice, ... saying: 'This chalice is the New Testament of My Blood' . . . . Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread—or drink the chalice of the Lord—unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."

Of what bread does St. Paul here speak but of the body of Christ, Our Lord, as the whole context proves? And what does he mean by the drinking of the chalice but the drinking

of the blood of Christ? Otherwise no man could by eating bread and drinking the chalice unworthily be guilty of the body and blood of Our Lord. Compare this passage with our quotations from the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven . . . My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed . . . the bread which I shall give is My flesh." Can there be anything clearer or more conclusive? The body of Our Lord is then called bread because it is the true and best food of our souls, and it may fitly be called bread, because it is very usual to call things by what they appear to be; and lastly, because the accidents of bread and wine have even after consecration the property of nourishing, if not directly, at least indirectly, i. e., when the substance of the body and blood of Christ have by a second miracle of God's omnipotence been converted into a new substance that can nourish the body of those that receive the Holy Eucharist. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 77, a. 5, 6).

What does tradition teach us on the subject of the Real Presence of Our Lord? There is a perfect unanimity among all the Fathers of the Church. To quote them all would be a long and tedious task: a few selections from their writings must suffice.

St. Ambrose, in his book "The Initiated," tells us that the same true body of Our Lord, which was assumed of the Virgin, is received in this Sacrament: a truth, he says, to be believed by all. St. Chrysostom—to cite only one part of his testimony on the subject at issue—warns us in his explanation of the sixth chapter of St. John, as follows: "Let us obey and not contradict God, although what He says may seem contrary to our reason and our sight: His words cannot deceive, our senses are easily deceived." St. Augustine, in full accord with his teacher St. Ambrose, remarks: "To carry himself in his own hands, is impossible to man and peculiar to Christ alone: He was carried in His own hands; when giving His body to be eaten, He said: 'This is My body.'"

Liturgies. We pass over the many testimonies of the early Fathers to say a word on liturgies, now called "missals" among us. These books, containing what is to be observed in the public function of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, as distinguished from the rituals that prescribe the observances in the administration of the Sacraments and of minor functions, shall provide us with another clear proof of the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. Some are very ancient, such as the liturgies of St. Peter, of St. James and of St. Mark, the Evangelist. These, as to their substance must be ascribed to Apostolic times, or at least to the first centuries of the Church. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who lived in the middle of the fourth century, certainly used that of St. James, as is evident from a comparison

of the latter with the fifth instruction of his catechism. That of St. Mark was in use in Alexandria and the Eutychians or Jacobites, who separated from the Church after the Council of Chalcedon in 451, still use it.

The Roman Liturgy is of all the ancient liturgies the most entire and the oldest, as there is nothing in it that is posterior to the fifth century.

From the above-mentioned liturgies many others have sprung, like that of St. Basil the Great, still in use by the Nestorians, who separated from the Church in 431; the liturgy of St. Ambrose, the Mozarabic (Spanish), the Galican, etc.

Now all these early liturgies, spread over many lands, without exception prove the belief in the true, real and substantial presence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, as well as in the dogma of transubstantiation; for in all these is found an invocation that the bread and wine, or the species offered on the altar, may become the body and blood of Our Lord.

About the present belief of all the Oriental sects, there is not a shadow of doubt; even the Protestants were forced to admit it, after the deputation which they sent to Jeremiah, the schismatic archbishop of Constantinople in order to ascertain the doctrine of the Greeks.

If there had been any error in any church, when the authority of the Popes was acknowledged all over the world, such an error about the Real Presence would soon have called for a rebuke or a condemnation from the Church of Rome. We have an example of it in Abelard, an archpriest of Angers, France. Although admitting the Real Presence, he denied the transubstantiation. He was condemned in the year 1050, and he is the first one known to have impugned this doctrine. He is said by some historians to have brought up anew the errors of one John Scott, surnamed Erigene or Irish, who lived in the eighth century, but since the latter was rather obscure and immethodical in his theological writings, little attention, it seems, was paid to his errors. Abelard was condemned three times and as many times retracted, and finally, according to common opinion he died repentant and in communion with the Church. He may be called the father of the Sacramentarians who, like Carlstadt, Luther and their followers, admitted the Real Presence, but rejected the conversion of the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of our Saviour.

The decisions of the Councils of the Church are another proof of the true, real and substantial presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist, and of the dogma of transubstantiation. We have cited in No. 238 the clear and emphatic decisions of the Council of Trent.

When Berengarius broached his doctrine against transubstantiation, fifteen councils in Italy and France condemned his

errors, and the Council of Lateran in 1215, at which many Greek bishops assisted, declared anew the doctrine of transubstantiation effected by the power of God.

Finally, the argument of prescription and the concurring doctrine of the Greeks, of the Armenians, and of all other Oriental Christian sects, prove that the doctrine of the Protestants of all shades in the sixteenth century was an innovation. When Abelard invented his new heresy, likewise when Carlstadt defended the same erroneous doctrine, and when Calvin saw in the Eucharist but a sign or a figure of the body and blood of Christ, both the Oriental and Occidental Churches believed in the Real Presence and in transubstantiation. Consequently it is for our adversaries to show when such an astounding doctrine was first introduced. If they cannot tell us by whom and at what time, we have a right to conclude that Christ Himself was the Author and Teacher of the heavenly doctrine.

247. How was the substance of the bread and wine changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ?

The substance of the bread and wine was changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ by His almighty power.

The catechism by this answer indicates sufficiently that the change called transubstantiation, which the Church teaches, is miraculous and cannot be explained by any natural or analogous transmutation in the wide range of created things. It baffles all the efforts of our imagination, and mocks the powers of our conception; but "no word shall be impossible with God" (Luke i. 37), i. e., God can do all things that are not absurd and do not contain a proof of impotence rather than of omnipotence, such as to die, to err, to deceive, to sin; for, says St. Augustine, if He could do these things, He would not be omnipotent; He would not be God.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 13, C. 3) points to the miraculous and mysterious manner of Christ's presence in the following canon: "If anyone denies that in the venerable Sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ is whole and entire under each species and under every part of each species, when these parts are separated, let him be anathema." In another text of the same chapter the same eminent Council teaches that Christ is also whole and entire in every part of each species, before the species

are divided, and this follows from the notion of a substance, which is whole and entire wherever it exists: e. g., a drop of water contains the whole substance of water as well as does the water in a river or in the ocean.

That this is the mind of the Fathers of the Council follows from Chapter 1 of the same Session: "It is not repugnant, indeed, that Our Saviour be always seated in heaven at the right of the Father, according to the natural mode of His existence and that nevertheless He be by His substance sacramentally present in several other places, according to a mode of existence that we can hardly express in words, but which we can, by a mind enlightened by faith, conceive as possible to God, and which we must believe with an invincible constancy."

The Fathers' mind in the foregoing quotation is more clearly set forth in the Roman Catechism, when it says, that "Our Lord is not in the Sacrament as in a place: place regards things, only inasmuch as they have magnitude; and it is not said that Christ is in the Sacrament inasmuch as He is great or small, terms which belong to quantity, but inasmuch as He is there in substance. The substance of the bread is changed into the substance of Christ, not into magnitude or quantity; and substance, it will be acknowledged, is contained in a small as well as in a large space. The substance of air, for instance, whether in a large or in a small quantity, and that of water whether confined in a vessel or flowing in a river, must necessarily be the same. As then the body of Our Lord succeeds to the substance of the bread, we must confess it to be in the Sacrament after the same manner as that of the bread was before consecration: whether the substance of the bread was present in greater or less quantity is a matter of entire indifference."

We now come to another effect produced by the consecration, viz., the existence of the species of bread and wine in the Sacrament without a subject or substance. The accidents cannot inhere in the body and blood of Christ and, therefore, contrary to all physical laws, they subsist by themselves without inhering in any subject.

In order to understand the doctrine of the Church on the Real Presence, we should bear in mind:

1. That the body of Christ, present under the sacramental species or under the accidents of bread and wine, is His glorious body impassible and spiritualized. In order to form an idea of how our Lord can truly and really exist under visible accidents or appearances, without being seen is easy enough, if we remember that Christ after His resurrection and before His ascension, made Himself at will either visible and palpable, or invisible and impalpable, preserving nevertheless His body and blood intact, for both were clothed with spirituality and incorruptibility, that is, they were endowed with properties similar

to those of a spirit. The true and real body of Our Lord is in some manner like a spirit: its nerves, its bones, its flesh, etc., although present under the outward appearance of bread and wine are neither visible, nor palpable, and they have no dimension, or weight, or color. All the members of Christ's body are present by concomitance; for by virtue of the words of consecration the substance of the body and blood of Our Saviour is present, and the component parts of His body and blood, as well as His soul and divinity are present likewise by concomitance.

2. Since Christ cannot be said to be in a place like a material body that occupies as much space as its dimensions require, but is in the Sacrament in a special manner proper to this Sacrament, and since the substance of the bread and wine is converted into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, and since the substance of the bread and wine was present before consecration in every part, however small, of their accidents, we necessarily conclude that after consecration Christ is whole and entire under the least particle or division of the species of bread and wine. Hence, the smallest consecrated host contains as much as the largest one, and when a consecrated host is broken, the body of Christ is not broken, but Our Lord is present whole and entire under each little particle. Yet we should not conclude from this that, because there are many hosts and many breads, that there are many Christs, or that He is multiplied according to the number of particles: there is but one Christ and it is the same Christ Who is in heaven and in every consecrated host in the world; with this difference nevertheless, that in heaven He is present according to His divine nature and the nature of His glorified body, but on earth He is present miraculously. Thousands of angels, whom we believe surround the tabernacles, where the consecrated hosts are kept, humbly adore our divine Lord; they see Him and behold Him, but not by their natural and inherent power of intellect; for although they understand all the laws of nature, all their changes and connections, and thus they see in what manner Christ is present, nevertheless they cannot see God by a natural vision, but by that vision by which they see God as He is, face to face.

3. Another truth taught by St. Thomas respecting the Holy Eucharist is that the departure of the substance of bread and wine does not cause an empty space; but this point presents no difficulty, since the substance of a spiritualized body occupies no space, and the space is occupied as before consecration by the accidents of the bread and wine. Only matter which has breadth, height and depth can occupy space. If we once admit, and faith requires this of us, that God can create a material substance without accidents, as well as accidents without a substance, all our difficulty vanishes. This latter truth cannot be

proved by analogy with anything in nature, and can hardly be conceived by our weak minds, but neither can we understand the creation out of nothing, the resurrection of the dead, the Incarnation, the Trinity and Unity of God, or the many changes that take place in the material world, as in plant life for instance. Much less can we understand the connection between a spiritual and a material world, e. g., between our soul and our body. Shall we deny the existence of our body and soul because we cannot understand how the soul communicates with the outside world through our material body?

248. Does this change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ continue to be made in the Church?

This change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ continues to be made in the Church by Jesus Christ through the ministry of His priests.

When Christ had converted the bread and wine into His body and blood, He said: "Do this for a commemoration of Me." We do not believe that the Eleven undertook to fulfill this commandment until after Pentecost Day; neither did they baptize or preach openly to the people during the forty days that Christ still remained upon earth. They had first to be fully instructed by Our Lord in all that concerns the constitution of the Church, their privileges and their duties; they had also to be further enlightened and fortified by the Holy Ghost, for whose coming they prepared themselves by a ten days' retreat, spent in prayer and fasting. Christ Our Lord did undoubtedly during the forty days that elapsed between His resurrection and His ascension break the bread for them, as the act was then called; that is, He repeated at various times what He had done at the Last Supper, giving them His body and His blood as a spiritual food, as He did, for instance, when He was with the two disciples at Emmaus and also on the banks of Lake Tiberias.

After the forever memorable day of Pentecost, the Apostles gathered around them the disciples of Christ and the new converts, and that frequently, if not daily, and notably on the first day of the week. At such times, they invariably broke the

bread for them, i. e., they consecrated with prayers and ceremonies the bread and wine by converting it into the body and blood of Our Lord, and they gave the people what we call today Holy Communion. We learn from St. Paul that these gatherings, where the rites of the Last Supper were performed, were usual and very general among the early Christians, and St. Luke tells us that it was not only of common, but of daily occurrence. But, as can be well imagined, temples were not always available and the sacred rites, which we now call Mass, were mostly held in private houses. The believers, "continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house; they took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart." (Acts ii. 46). "And on the first day of the week when we were assembled to break bread." (Ibid. xx. 7). "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" (1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 20-24). From the same epistle, we learn that already abuses existed in the gatherings of the Christians, even in the time of St. Paul. It seems that some people attended the gatherings rather to partake of abundant food than of the Last Supper; for after relating again the institution of the Holy Eucharist, St. Paul commands those that are hungry to eat at home beforehand.

We need not repeat what both the Greek and Latin Churches have at all times practiced. The Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the decisions of the councils and the earliest and more recent liturgies, prove conclusively that the injunction of Christ, "Do this for a commemoration of Me," has always been faithfully observed in the Church by the daily celebration of Mass. The Protestants by abandoning or condemning the old-time uninterrupted practice, deny Christ, condemn the Apostles and belie the teaching of all Christians before the sixteenth century on the Real Presence. How long will they remain blind to their own interests? How long, O Lord?

249. When did Christ give His priests the power to change bread and wine into his body and blood?

Christ gave His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood, when He said to the Apostles: "Do this for a commemoration of Me."

In the preceding number, the argument of prescription, or the fact that both eastern and western churches have from the beginning of Christianity up to the sixteenth century observed the rite instituted by Christ at the Last Supper, was used to prove that the Apostles and their successors, the priests and bishops of the Church have claimed the power to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Our Lord, and hence we can safely conclude that this power was given them by Christ Himself. If we had no scriptural proof of it, it would not be less certain that the Apostles received the power from their Master; but scriptural proof is available, and is alone sufficiently convincing; for St. Luke (xxii. 19, 20) relates of Our Lord that "taking bread He gave thanks and broke, and gave to them, saying: 'This is My body which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me.' In like manner the chalice also, saying: 'This is the chalice, the New Testament in My blood, which shall be shed for you.'"

The obvious, literal sense of the words "do this" conveys the precept to do what Christ was then doing, viz., to consecrate the bread and wine, or to change them into His body and blood; for the words, "in like manner," show that the two consecrations of the bread and of the wine are connected actions, and that the words "do this" refer to both. The words, "for a commemoration of Me," give still more weight to the argument, for without the two consecrations there would be nothing to show the death of the Lord until He comes again on the last day, as St. Paul expresses it. (1 Cor. xi. 26). The Apostle of the Gentiles indicates more fully what Our Lord intended by the words, "Do this for a commemoration of Me," for he says that Christ repeated the injunction after each consecration. (Ib. xi. 24-26).

250. How do the priests exercise the power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ?

The priests exercise the power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ through the words of consecration in the Mass, which are the words of Christ: "This is My body; this is My blood."

What Christ did at the institution of the Holy Eucharist may be divided into three parts: 1. He took bread, gave thanks, blest and broke it; He did likewise with the cup of wine, except for the breaking. 2. He changed the bread and wine into His body and blood, by the words: "This is My body; this is My blood." 3. He handed to His Apostles the consecrated bread and wine in Holy Communion, saying: "Take ye and eat; take ye and drink," and all present received the body and blood of Our Lord.

The essential part of the form that effects the Sacrament are the words: "This is My body; This is My blood," and these are the words of consecration, i. e., the words that convert the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ. The Sacrament is effected by the consecration, and of the three parts of the Mass, the consecration alone is essential to the Sacrament, for we have seen that the Sacrament consists in the outward sign, the accidents or appearances of the bread and wine which contain Christ whole and entire; because the matter, viz., the bread and wine, and the form or words pronounced, are transitory and do not remain. The third part of the Mass is not necessary to the Sacrament, but as we shall see, it is an essential part of the sacrifice; and the first part of the Mass, which contains the Offertory, is a preparation for the sublime act of consecration. To this first part of the Mass correspond the actions of Our Saviour of taking bread and wine into His hands, of giving thanks and of blessing the offering.

LESSON THE TWENTY-THIRD

ON THE ENDS FOR WHICH THE HOLY EUCHARIST WAS INSTITUTED

251. Why did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist?

Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist:

1. To unite us to Himself and to nourish our souls with His divine life.

2. To increase sanctifying grace and all virtues in our souls.

3. To lessen our evil inclinations.

4. To be a pledge of everlasting life.

5. To fit our bodies for a glorious resurrection.

6. To continue the sacrifice of the Cross in His Church.

God in all his works seeks ultimately His own glory, and hence the catechism does not need to mention it.

The ends for which the Holy Eucharist was instituted may be reduced to three, and from these three all the others are only consequences: 1. Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist as a nourishment for our souls, for the accidents of the bread and wine, or the outward sign, clearly indicate it; 2. Christ instituted it as a sacrifice of the New Law; and 3. He made it as a perpetual remembrance of His passion and of His undying love for men. The last two ends will be fully explained in the next lesson, which treats of the Sacrifice of the Mass, and, therefore, we shall consider only the Holy Eucharist as a nourishment of the soul.

It is evident that there cannot be question here of food for the body, for when Christ made the promise of this Sacrament, as we have seen in our quotations from the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, everything showed that He intended His body and blood to be a spiritual food for the soul; besides the Apostles had already eaten the paschal lamb and their ordinary supper after it, before He instituted the Holy Eucharist; again, the Holy Eucharist being a Sacrament, it can only be intended for the good of the soul.

The Holy Eucharist as a Spiritual Food. From the fact that the Holy Eucharist is a true food of the soul, the first five ends for which Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist, as given in the catechism, will be found to follow, for they are the effects produced in our soul by this heavenly food; so that by explaining in what this heavenly food consists, and what special benefits are derived from it, we explain all that the catechism teaches in this number.

1. We cannot repeat often enough that the soul, besides its natural life as a spirit, by which it thinks, reasons, judges and determines, can also be endowed with a supernatural life, and that this life, called sometimes the spiritual life of the soul, is necessary to attain our final destiny. We have learned, furthermore, that after receiving Baptism, which bestows the supernat-

ural life, Christians continue to possess it, or are in the state of damnation, i. e., in the state of mortal sin. How much more important then is that supernatural life than the life of the body we prize so much.

"The bread," says Christ, "which I shall give, is My flesh for the life of the world." (John vi. 52). "Amen, amen, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. (Ib. 54).

2. The soul possesses supernatural life when it is in the state of sanctifying grace. Does the Holy Eucharist give us sanctifying grace? Not directly, because it is a Sacrament of the Living (Cf. No. 147—3); but it increases sanctifying grace or the supernatural life. As natural food maintains and strenthens the body, likewise supernatural life is strengthened and perfected by the Holy Eucharist. This Sacrament by increasing sanctifying grace in the soul, makes us also more agreeable to God, because by it we live the life of Christ "As the living Father hath sent Me and I live by the Father, so he that eatheth Me, the same shall also live by Me." (Ib. 58). If we desire to be greatly loved by God, we must strive to participate more and more in the life of Christ, which is sanctifying grace, and which the Holy Eucharist bestows so abundantly.

St. Augustine represents Our Lord as saying: "I am the nourishment of the strong; grow, and then thou shalt eat Me; thou wilt not change Me in thee, as happens with the food of the body, but I Myself will change thee into Me."

3. When do we live the life of Christ? When we abandon our own life to which our evil inclinations prompt and incite us, become like Christ, meek, humble, patient and charitable, and practice all the virtues of our state of life; for the Holy Eucharist infuses into our soul the theological virtues, the moral virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, together with an increase of sanctifying grace.

4. Supernatural life is further strengthened by removing what lessens and weakens it, viz., venial sin. "A just man shall fall seven times,' 'and as each venial sin weakens the supernatural life, many unforgiven venial sins would finally cause weakness and debility in the soul, and having thus lost the power of resisting temptations, it would soon fall into mortal sin. It is in that sense that the Council of Trent speaks, when it says: "It, the Holy Eucharist, is an antidote that delivers us from daily sins and preserves us from mortal sins."

5. The Holy Eucharist is a pledge of everlasting life, for Our Lord says that "he that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath life everlasting: and I will raise him up in the last day." Eternal life is the reward of those who at their death have preserved the supernatural life of grace, and since the body has been the instrument of the soul in the practice of

many virtues, it also will in some manner participate in the delights of the soul. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 79, a. 6; q. 39, a. 5).

6. The Holy Eucharist also remits a portion or all of the temporal punishments due to sin, not directly, because its direct effect is to nourish the soul, but indirectly by acts of charity and inward devotion, which are abundantly bestowed on the soul.

7. The Holy Eucharist diminishes also the evil inclinations of the intellectual and sensual appetites, by subduing them to sound reason, by inciting in us pious motions, which counteract the ill-regulated passions and the concupiscence of the flesh, and also by bestowing upon the soul a spiritual unction or delectation in things celestial; for, as well-prepared food delights the palate, likewise the Holy Eucharist transforms the soul in such a manner that it despises temporal joys and finds its peace and repose in conforming itself in all things to the will of God.

8. The Holy Eucharist confers also sacramental graces, i. e., a special vigor and strength to preserve the supernatural life of the soul; and this effect is similar to what is produced in the body by natural food, which sustains, increases, and delights the body, repairing the daily weakness caused by internal heat and physical exertion. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 79, a. 1).

252. How are we united to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist?

We are united to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist by means of Holy Communion.

The union of our soul and body with the body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord is a union of supernatural life, and that ineffable union gives to our soul a participation in the divine life. Christ said that He lives by the life of His Father; and the Son communicates His own life in the Holy Eucharist to him who eateth His flesh. (John vi. 58). How is this transformation of our life into the life of Christ effected? By Holy Communion, says the catechism.

253. What is Holy Communion?

Holy Communion is the receiving of the body and blood of Christ.

The word "communion" has several meanings in the language of the Church, but especially two: it signifies the mystical union in Christ among all the members of

the militant, suffering and triumphant church, and this is called the Communion of Saints. The members thereof, with Christ at their head, constitute together the mystical body of Christ, because there is among all the members a community of interest, a common supernatural life flowing from its Head, the Saviour. That union among all members in Christ becomes closer and more intimate by acts that will effect greater intimacy between the soul and Christ, and that salutary result is particularly attributable to the reception of the Holy Eucharist. Hence the act by which we share so plentifully Christ's divine life, in common with others, is called from its effect, a participation, a communion. When we say "Holy Communion," we mean the receiving of the body and blood of Christ, by which the supernatural and divine life is communicated to us; for, as we have explained, by eating the flesh of the Son of God, we live the life of Christ and He lives in us and we in Him.

The ineffable union of our soul with Christ in Holy Communion can hardly be conceived by our feeble minds, and several of the Fathers have had recourse to similitudes to make it better understood. Some, like St. St. Cyril, have compared it to the fusion of two pieces of wax melted together, which after their joining are one and undistinguishable; others compare our soul to a piece of iron, which plunged into the fire, becomes itself fire.

Holy Communion under One or Both Species. It must be admitted that at the Last Supper, Christ gave Himself to His disciples under both forms, under the form of bread and under the form of wine. Why then does the Church give to the laity communion under the form of bread only?

1. The Church by doing so does not deprive the faithful of any substantial benefit; for he that receives Communion under the form of bread only, receives Our Lord whole and entire, because He is whole and entire, with His body, blood, soul and divinity, under each species and in every part of each species.

2. The manner of receiving Our Lord is then only a matter

of discipline, which the Church can change when she considers it expedient.

3. What is the reason why the present discipline has been adopted? The principal reason is that the number of Catholics has become very great, and there would be considerable danger of spilling the sacred blood of Our Lord when thousands of people approach the Holy Table in one Church and on the same day. There are other minor reasons: viz., the repugnance some people feel to the taste and smell of wine, and the difficulty there would be in procuring a sufficient quantity of wine in countries where wine is not produced, especially in localities far distant from the place of its production.

4. When we examine the ancient practice of the Church, we find that, although it was usual, until the beginning of the thirteenth century, to give Holy Communion under both kinds, this was not observed in all circumstances. In times of persecution the faithful were allowed to keep the Holy Eucharist in a little safe, or tabernacle, or box in their houses; this certainly was not done under both kinds. Again, when carrying Communion to the sick, the consecrated host alone was taken. Pope Gelasius in the fifth century, in order to detect the Manicheans, who objected to the use of the consecrated wine, ordered that every one should communicate under both kinds. Why this order, if it was not left to everyone to communicate either under one kind or under both? (Cf. Card. Gibbons, **Faith of Our Fathers**, Chap. XXII. Communion under One Kind).

254. What is necessary to make a good Communion?

To make a good Communion, it is necessary to be in a state of sanctifying grace and to be fasting from midnight.

Here we can learn the dispositions required to make a good Communion; some regard the soul, and some regard the body.

1. To receive the Sacraments of the Living, one is to be free from mortal sin, or, what is the same, to be in the state of grace; for after Baptism we are always in the state of grace, if no mortal sin has deprived us of it. He that is guilty of a mortal sin must first have recourse to the Sacrament of Penance to blot out its guilt before partaking of the heavenly Bread.

It would not do to make only an act of perfect

contrition; for by divine law, as well as by the law of the Church, we are bound to confess our mortal sins before attempting to receive the Holy Eucharist. Besides, it would be exposing ourselves to the danger of making an unworthy or sacrilegious Communion.

This omission of confession would be allowed only when one is at the altar-railing, about to receive Holy Communion, and there remembers a mortal sin committed since his last worthy confession. In that case he should promptly make an act of perfect contrition with the resolution to confess his sin as soon as practicable. Thus he would avoid the scandal which the sudden withdrawal from the Communion railing would necessarily cause. This exception may also happen at an extraordinary occasion, like that of a First Communion in a body. If any child whilst in church should remember a mortal sin committed since his last confession and has not the opportunity of confessing it, he may receive the Holy Eucharist, after making a sincere act of perfect contrition. If, however, scandal will not be given by abstaining from Communion, this should always be done.

Venial sins do not make the Communion unworthy, for venial sins do not rob the soul of sanctifying grace, or turn God's friends into His enemies. The weak in body do not abstain from eating and drinking, and those whose supernatural life of the soul has been weakened by numerous venial sins, are precisely those who should often avail themselves of the life-giving celestial food to strengthen their weakness and transform their lukewarmness and tepidity into fervor and devotedness in God's service. This fervor coupled with zeal, both born of charity, remits venial sins as we have explained in No. 251, and hence makes the danger of falling into mortal sin more remote.

2. To be fasting from midnight. This, like Communion under one kind, belongs to the discipline of the Church, for we all know that when Our Lord instituted

the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the Apostles were not fasting. (No. 240). The fast is enjoined because it tends to make us receive the Sacrament with greater interior affection and devotion.

3. Besides the two conditions here given for receiving Holy Communion, we should not forget that communicants should be sufficiently instructed in the nature and effect of this Sacrament, according to the capacity of each individual, for more is required from the learned than from the unlettered. Pope Pius X, of holy memory, required for the young only sufficient knowledge to discern the body of Our Lord from common food, and this simple knowledge ought also to be sufficient for the very ignorant who can learn but little more; provided that in the case of adults, they know at least the chief points of our religion which are necessary for salvation, and that they have learned by heart the most essential prayers, viz., the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Apostles' Creed.

255. Does he who receives Holy Communion in mortal sin receive the body and blood of Christ?

He who receives Holy Communion in mortal sin receives the body and blood of Christ, but does not receive His grace, and he commits a great sacrilege.

Let us repeat again that the Holy Eucharist is the spiritual food of the soul, and that it cannot be assimilated by those whose souls have lost this supernatural life, i. e., habitual or sanctifying grace. As natural food and drink cannot benefit the dead, neither can the supernatural food of the soul, i. e., the body and blood of Christ, give grace to the soul that is spiritually dead through mortal sin.

The sinner, who receives Holy Cammunion, receives nevertheless the body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord. The meek Jesus Who allowed Himself to be received in Communion by Judas, to be bound by the

Jews into whose hands the traitor delivered Him, to be dragged through the streets of Jerusalem, to be condemned to death, to be whipped unmercifully whilst tied to a pillar, to be whipped with thorns, to be spit upon and blasphemed, and finally to be crucified, submits to a like outrage when He is received by the sacrilegious sinner. The miserable wretch does not merely deliver Our Lord to unbelievers or men unconscious, as were the Jews, of the enormity of their crime, but to demons in possession of the soul of the sacrilegious communicant, who thus subjects the meek Saviour, as far as he is able, to all sorts of indignities.

Of all the sacrileges that a human being can commit, none can be compared to the enormity of a sacrilegious Communion. Therefore St. Paul says of him who eats and drinks unworthily the body and blood of Our Lord, that he damns himself to eternal misery. "Therefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord . . . . he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself." (1 Cor. XI; 27, 29). The Apostle, by these remarkable words seems to intimate that the sacrilegious communicant pronounces his own condemnation to an eternal separation from God, and voluntarily consigns himself to everlasting punishment.

Indeed, to be guilty of the body and blood of Our Lord, is a greater crime than felony, piracy, willful and premeditated murder, yea, a greater crime than that of a monarch and his abettors who enter upon an unjust war and are the cause of the death of millions of innocents, for is not the body and blood of the God-Man worth more than the generations of people that have passed and will come into the world until its final destruction? Is it a wonder that St. Paul assures us that the sacrilegious communicant condemns himself before the infinitely just Judge, Whose body, soul and divinity he has outraged and Who therefore hurls at him, with

a divine indignation and holy anger, the irrevocable sentence: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire"? (Cf. No. 144 and No. 318 on Sacrilege).

265. Is it enough to be free from mortal sin to receive plentifully the graces of Holy Communion?

It is not enough to be free from mortal sin to receive plentifully the graces of Holy Communion, but we should be free from all affection to venial sins and should make acts of lively faith, of firm hope and ardent love.

Two things are taught in this answer: 1st, what we must avoid in order to receive the abundant graces of this Sacrament, and 2nd, what preparation should be made for its reception, and what sentiments should accompany it.

1. Pope Pius X in his memorable decree on Holy Communion, requires only two conditions for its reception: freedom from mortal sin and a good intention; and by a good intention is understood any intention that in itself is praiseworthy and tends to the eternal welfare of the soul; e. g., to obtain an increase of sanctifying grace, to be able to resist the temptations to venial and mortal sin, to obtain the grace of some particular virtue, to advance towards perfection and in the love of God, etc. From this we learn that even an affection to venial sin is not an obstacle to Holy Communion, and not even to frequent Communion. Is the teaching of the catechism not contrary, then, to the decree of the Holy Father? Certainly not. What is meant by an affection for venial sin? By it is meant that one is not willing to forego the pleasure he feels in committing one or more particular actions, which constitute venial sins. A communicant can have a good intention if he desire only the grace to avoid one particular sin or to be able to practice one virtue opposed to it; but although such a disposition is sufficient, is it a proper disposition to receive an abundance of grace? Un-

doubtedly not. He who is desirous of pleasing God in all things will strive to avoid all sins however small, and to conform himself, as far as our weak nature permits, to the will of God in all his actions; and he alone can expect a full and abundant fruit from his Communions; for he alone has an ardent and perfect charity that influences all his thoughts, his desires, his words and his works.

The Holy Father then tells us only what is absolutely required for Holy Communion in order to receive some benefit from it; and the catechism in this answer speaks only of the very best disposition for receiving plentifully the graces which the Sacrament usually confers, and that is the detestation of all sins however small, coupled with the most ardent charity or love of God and one's neighbor.

In order to understand the dispositions required to obtain abundant fruit from our Communions, let us again advert to the analogy of natural food. To benefit by the common food we eat, we must have food that is (a) wholesome, and therefore we must know it; (b) we must have appetite; (c) we must be able to assimilate our food, so that it may be converted into our blood, flesh, nerves and bones; and (d) we must find in it strength to labor and to perform all the work required of us.

Now in matters spiritual, in order to obtain abundant graces from our Communions, we note the following:

(a) A lively faith in the Real Presence of Our Lord is required. These three simple questions: who comes to us in Holy Communion? to whom does He come? and why does He come or what does He bring? will, with the knowledge of what we have learned of the Holy Eucharist, give us that lively faith. Nothing can be imagined greater, nothing more noble, nothing more eminent, than the heavenly Food of our souls: Truth Itself, Infinite Wisdom, Infinite Holiness, Infinite Good-

ness. The all-wise, almighty God cannot give us anything greater than the Infinite, Himself.

(b) To whom does He come, but to the most miserable of all creatures, who has nothing but sin he can call his own? How should a poor beggar feel towards Him who has all things the needy man can desire? How should the hungry man, weak and starving, feel in the presence of Him Who can satiate his appetite now and forevermore and Who has promised His abundant and inexhaustible treasures in proportion to our craving for them. The greater our appetite, hunger and craving, the greater the satiety. Can we find any reason for mistrust? No, rather abundant reasons to firmly trust in God's fidelity and in His almighty power to fulfill His promises.

(c) Natural food, to make the weak healthy, strong and robust, needs to be assimilated. The natural assimilation of wholesome food by digestion finds its counterpart and analogy in the soul's love of God, and secondarily in the love towards our neighbor for the love of God. If appetite is useful, yea necessary, for natural food, the power of assimilation is still more necessary, for natural food, the power of assimilation is still more necessary. If after starvation one eats more than he can digest, the surplus food and drink become hurtful. Likewise, our amiable Saviour will give us only in proportion to our power of assimilation or in proportion to the ardor of our charity. Unless we live already the life of grace, and love God above all things, even more than the life of our body, the Holy Eucharist can profit us nothing; for the state of habitual grace, at least, is required. If our love is such that we would rather suffer the loss of all things, even of our natural life, than to commit one venial sin, or still better, if we would rather die than not practice all the virtues of our state of life, including the evangelical counsels, then such an ardent love will bring the greatest measure of grace, and each succeeding Holy Communion, by measuring

each time our charity or the supernatural life of the soul, will bring each time a greater superabundance of grace. Then can we truly say that we do not live, but Christ lives in us.

Hence a holy life, or the practice of every virtue, should be a preparation for our devout Communions; and acts of faith, hope and love should precede and accompany them. Again, as the secretions of the body, such as the saliva, etc., are indispensable for the assimilation of our natural food, acts of adoration, thanksgiving and the offering up of ourselves to our heavenly Host, Who has deigned not only to visit us, but to become our life, our strength and our delight, should also follow the reception of the divine food, for then only will the fervent and ardent communicant become totally incorporated in Christ.

(d) O inestimable effects of one worthy Communion, when that transformation of our whole being, with all its affections and desires, into our God and Saviour is perfected and completed! But let us not forget that as the natural heat of the body weakens it, so likewise our daily struggles against temptations weaken the soul; and hence the frequent reparation of our lost strength becomes absolutely necessary. This subject will be further developed in No. 260.

257. What is the fast necessary for Holy Communion?

The fast necessary for Holy Communion is the abstaining from midnight from everything which is taken as food or drink.

The principal reason assigned by learned divines, why Our Lord did not require the Apostles to fast before partaking of the Eucharist at the Last Supper, is that the figure should precede the reality which was to replace it. The paschal lamb slain and eaten on the night of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, marked a new epoch in the wonderful history of the chosen people of God; it heralded their delivery from an unbearable slavery. But Christ was the Lamb of God which was also to be slain and eaten. His passion soon to begin was to

culminate in His death on the cross and His last sigh and His last words, "All is consummated," were to sound the deliverance of all the descendants of Adam from the slavery of Satan. Therefore the figure, the eating of the paschal lamb, according to the Mosaic rite might well have preceded the Eucharistic Rite. We have the reality, and no figure only; but it is a purely spiritual food; and hence, in order to impress its pre-eminence upon our minds and create in our hearts a craving for the supernatural sustenance, the Church has wisely forbidden all other food or drink from the midnight previous. If the Apostles did for a time bring the people together at the Agape or love feast, at which the rich and the poor, after partaking together of the offerings, consisting of sundry eatables provided by the wealthy and charitable members of the flock, received the Holy Eucharist, this was done in order to foster a spirit of brotherly love, and to follow as nearly as possible what Our Lord had done at the Last Supper, until the Christian religion was firmly established. But although this custom was observed in some churches for several centuries, it was not followed everywhere as a matter of obligation. The actual custom of receiving Holy Communion fasting, was certainly introduced in Africa before the fourth century, and not long afterwards in all the churches of the West.

Now in what does this fast commanded by the Church consist? It consists in abstaining from food or drink from the midnight preceding the Holy Communion. This abstinence from everything taken as food or drink obliges under pain of mortal sin; and let it be remarked that the word "midnight" must be taken in its strictest sense: if the clock strikes twelve, it determines the midnight hour. If there are several clocks or watches in the house, and it is not known which one is correct, we are at liberty to follow any one of them. We may also follow the real sun time, the daylight-saving time, or standard time.

Three things are commonly required to constitute the breaking of the fast: 1st, the food or drink must come from without and be swallowed; 2nd, it must have the property of food or drink; 3rd, it must be taken in the manner of food or drink.

Hence blood from the mouth may be swallowed without breaking the fast; the same may be said of food that remains between the teeth from the previous

meal, although if it be a piece of meat, or fruit, etc., it should be ejected, if it can be conveniently done. A cook may taste a dish, a priest may taste the wine in the cruet to assure himself of its being pure, and neither breaks the fast provided no food or wine pass into the stomach. One may rinse the mouth with water, provided the water be not swallowed; should a drop afterwards still remain in the mouth and pass into the stomach with saliva, it would not break the fast. What enters into the mouth by respiration, such as dust, a flake of snow, a drop of rain or mist, is not taken in the manner of food or drink; neither can a bristle, a piece of wood or iron be called food, because they are not digestible.

People approaching the Holy Table should abstain from chewing or smoking, not because this is strictly forbidden, but because it is improper and unbecoming. Still if one is addicted to such habits and the privation of tobacco nauseates him, he should not be kept from communicating on that account, as his particular condition makes the use of tobacco proper and lawful. The use of snuff before communicating is less objectionable and is now allowed by general custom.

259. When are we bound to receive Holy Communion?

We are bound to receive Holy Communion, under pain of mortal sin, during the Easter time and when in danger of death.

Holy Communion being instituted for a spiritual food of the soul, the obligation of receiving it binds:

1. All Christians as soon as they have arrived at the full use of reason, and thereafter at least once a year at Easter time. The Easter time in this country begins with the first Sunday in Lent and extends to Trinity Sunday, inclusive.

2. Communion as Viaticum. All Christians of whatever condition, except as stated hereafter, are bound by

the law of God and of the Church to receive Holy Communion when in danger of death, irrespective of the cause of such danger; it must be received as a Viaticum, that is, as a preparation for the voyage into eternity, by those who are in danger of death from sickness or wounds, by soldiers who are about to enter into battle, by women before childbirth, by those condemned to death, by sailors in time of war when the ship on which they serve may at any time be attacked by the enemy, by those who have to undergo a dangerous operation, etc.

3. The precept binds also those who only with great difficulty can withstand the severe temptations by which they are assailed, and although they may, strictly speaking, overcome those violent temptations by other means, like prayer and mortifications, still they are bound to have recourse to the surest remedy against the danger of mortal sin. Holy Communion is the most efficient, as well as the most suitable safeguard against all the attacks of the enemies of our salvation. Besides, he that neglects Holy Communion, will rarely have recourse to mortifications and to devout and trustful prayer. However, the common opinion among Catholic theologians is that no one in such a case can be considered guilty of a mortal sin, if he has recourse to humble prayer and to mortification of the flesh, and puts his whole trust in God in the hope of resisting violent temptation without recourse to Holy Communion.

4. Those in danger of death, who have not complied with their Easter duty are guilty of two mortal sins, if they refuse the Viaticum when they have the opportunity of receiving it.

Let it be remarked: (a) that if a sick person has received Holy Communion in danger of death, and if after convalescence falls again dangerously ill, he should communicate again. (b) Children having attained the use of reason should receive Holy Communion when they are dangerously sick, even if they have not made their First Communion, and no other knowledge is required of them than the essential points of Christian doc-

trine, required as a means of salvation, and sufficient intelligence to distinguish Holy Communion from common food. (c) Insane persons and absolute idiots, if they never had the use of reason cannot receive Holy Communion, because they cannot distinguish the Bread of Life from ordinary bread; but if they ever had the use of reason or any lucid moment, and it is not positively known that they were in the state of mortal sin before they lost their minds, or that they committed a mortal sin during the intervals in which they were sound of mind, they should be given Communion in case of danger of death, provided there be no danger of irreverence to the Blessed Sacrament. (d) Deaf-mutes, who are also blind and have been so from their birth, cannot receive Holy Communion, for they cannot be sufficiently instructed; but ordinary deaf-mutes can be taught, and if they can be properly instructed, they must receive not only when in danger of death, but yearly like other members of the Church. (e) We must decide likewise of the feeble-minded and half-idiots; for as St. Thomas explains, if they can discern the celestial Bread from common food, they should receive at Easter and when in danger of death. (f) To common drunkards, who are intoxicated and dangerously ill, Holy Communion should not be given, because their drunkenness is voluntary and sinful; they can only receive conditional absolution. But in the case of a person who seldom drinks to excess and is only by accident inebriated, Holy Communion should be given in danger of death, provided it be morally certain that he is in the state of grace and that it can be done without irreverence to the Blessed Sacrament. In case of doubt whether his drunkenness was sufficiently voluntary to constitute a mortal sin, it is to be presumed that it was not. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 80, a. 9, o). (g) The case of demoniacs is similar to that of the insane, who were at one time sound of mind. The Blessed Sacrament should not be denied them when they are in danger of death, if it is not proved that their lamentable state is due to their sinful life; but if it is evidently the consequence of grave sins, like those of immorality, impiety, etc., the Blessed Sacrament cannot be given them, unless they show signs of repentance. Demoniacal obsessions are now exceedingly rare, and care should be taken not to ascribe to evil spirits extreme cases of insanity.

260. Is it well to receive Holy Communion often?

It is well to receive Holy Communion often, as nothing is a greater aid to a holy life than often to receive the Author of all grace and the Source of all good.

We are not bound under pain of sin to receive Holy Communion often, if we except those whose duty obli-

gates them to strive for perfection; for the catechism only says that it is well, i. e., advisable, to receive the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist often. There is no law, human or divine, that obliges anyone under pain of mortal sin to receive Holy Communion more than once a year, except in danger of death, and then all who have arrived at the use of reason, must receive it in every new danger whether from sickness or accident.

If the catechism had been written after the sixteenth of December, 1905, when our Holy Father, Pius X, published his decree on "Daily Communion," the question would probably have been changed so as to read: "Is it well to receive Holy Communion often and daily?", or would have the word "daily" instead of "often," since the word "daily" contains the sense of "often." Still the answer of the catechism is correct, even after the decree; we have only to ask "how often" we are advised to receive Holy Communion, and the Holy Father answers for us "daily."

1. The above decree is peremptory and relegates forever to oblivion the Jansenistic rigorism once upheld by specious arguments. That false opinion was subversive of Catholic teaching; for the Jansenists maintained that frequent Communion is a reward for the holy and perfect Christian, instead of holding the true Catholic doctrine that frequent Communion is the very road to holiness and perfection.

The Holy Eucharist contains the Author of all grace, whether habitual or actual grace, and the Source of all good, whether spiritual or temporal. Where shall we find an exhaustible source for all our needs, whether for body or soul, for time and eternity, but in that divine Source, from which we may draw at will without diminishing in the least the infinite treasure hidden within it? O Lord, give us always that heavenly Bread that we may hunger no more, and give us the waters of the living Spring that we may thirst no more!

We ask every day: "Give us this day our daily bread," and still there are people who refuse it when it is offered them. Perhaps they crave instead material bread for the corruptible body, as if the Saviour, Who taught us that beautiful prayer,

the Our Father, had forgotten what He promised when He said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you." No, in the "Our Father" there is not one petition that regards the body; all regard the honor and glory of God and the spiritual welfare of the soul.

How different our lives from the practice of the first Christians, who began the day by assembling in the early morning to assist at Mass and partake of the heavenly food (Acts ii. 46); and who in times of persecution, when their life was always in danger, were allowed on account of their fervor to take the Holy Eucharist to their homes in order to communicate daily, and fortify themselves against the fury of their persecutors.

St. Thomas (P. III, q. 80, a. 10), after teaching that it is useful to receive daily when one is prepared, cites the authority of St. Ambrose: "If, whenever the blood of Christ is spilled, it is spilled for the remission of sins, I must always receive; I who always sin, always need medicine." He also cites St. Augustine, who says: "Receive daily, that daily it may benefit you"; and adds: "So live that you may deserve to receive daily." The Council of Trent (Sess. 13, c. 8) "admonishes, exhorts, supplicates and beseeches all Christians so to conduct themselves that they may frequently receive that supernatural bread," and the same Council (Sess. 22, c. 6) desires that all those who assist at Mass should also receive sacramentally in order to obtain more abundant fruit from the Holy Sacrifice.

Our Holy Father Pius X, in the above mentioned decree, speaks still more clearly; he settles once and for all time, not only the usefulness of daily Communion, but also the conditions required to receive daily.

The Holy Father teaches us that frequent and daily Communion is earnestly desired by Christ Our Lord, and by the Catholic Church; and that daily Communion is open to all the faithful of whatever condition of life, provided the communicants be free from mortal sin and have the right intention. We should not forget to remark that the law of fasting from food or drink from midnight remains obligatory, for the Holy Father makes no mention of any change in the laws of the Church.

2. In what does the right intention consist? It is plain that a good intention is required for the reception of any Sacrament. Hence we may not be indifferent to the graces bestowed through the Holy Eucharist; neither should we approach the Holy Table out of routine, out of vainglory or for the sake of human respect or simply to obey parents or other superiors. We must have the purpose of pleasing God, or of being

more intimately united with Him by charity, and of seeking in daily Communion a remedy against our spiritual weakness and our daily transgressions or defects.

Consequently any good intention is sufficient for communicating daily, such as to do what is agreeable to God, to be able to practice the virtues of our state of life, to increase in us sanctifying grace or charity or our soul's merits before God, to obtain greater fruit from our religious exercises of prayer and meditation or from the practice of the presence of God, i. e., of being more recollected. The good intention also extends to any and all spiritual necessities of the soul, such as to be able to avoid this or that sin, or this or that affection, this or that defect, this or that imperfection; but although it is to be recommended, it is not necessary to have any specific intention, if we have a general or implied intention to do something good or acceptable to God or to perform what the Church recommends.

3. The Holy Father also teaches us in this decree that venial sins are not an obstacle to the effects of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, even if such venial sins are fully deliberate and committed without remorse and purpose of amendment; for that is what is meant by having an affection for one or more venial sins. One or two examples must suffice. Suppose a young or married man goes every day to a club and loves cards or other amusements to such an extent that he seldom reaches home until eleven at night. We suppose also that neither neglects any serious duty, and that the parents of the one and the wife of the other do not seriously object, although they would rather see them home much earlier. One fails slightly in respect to his parents and the other in marital love. Should such men be deprived of daily Communion? "No," answers the Holy Father, "for if they receive daily, they will soon be gradually weaned from that excessive attachment to a licit amusement, and soon become better disposed to receive more abundantly the graces of Holy Communion." The same may be said of a woman who has a certain antipathy, a slight ill-feeling against a neighbor, and who is perhaps a little too proud or self-willed: daily Communion will bring that woman to love all the members of the mystical body of Christ, the

Church, as a Christian should love all those who are called to the same reward.

In order to receive abundantly the graces of Holy Communion, we must try to abandon all deliberate venial sins and prepare ourselves diligently for its reception, as well as make a suitable thanksgiving, according to our capacity, our circumstances and our duties. If a laborer, a servant or an employee can afford the time, it is best to make a special preparation and thanksgiving in church, but if one has only a quarter of an hour, he may prepare on his way to church and make his thanksgiving on his way home. (See No. 256).

4. Before deciding upon daily or frequent Communion, all should first ask the approval of their confessor, but this is advised only for the sake of prudence, and to inspire the recipient of both Sacraments, Penance and the Holy Eucharist, with a greater humility by which to obtain greater merit before God; for the confessor will only assure himself of the fact that his penitents have the two dispositions absolutely required: freedom from mortal sin and a good intention, and if they have these two, he is warned not to dissuade them from frequent and daily Communion.

5. The desire of the Holy Father to see the practice of frequent and daily Communion introduced throughout the Church, is so earnest, that he makes fatherly appeals to all parish priests, preachers and confessors to exhort, in season and out of season, all the faithful of whatever condition, but especially members and inmates of all religious and educational establishments, to begin the salutary practice without delay.

If we inquire into the reason of the Holy Father's earnest desire to see every Catholic of whatever condition approach the Holy Table daily, we shall find it in the fact that this is also the earnest desire of Our Lord. Was not the Manna, the type and figure of the Holy Eucharist, eaten daily? Was not the Holy Eucharist instituted as a food for the soul, under the appearance of bread, in order to teach us that as we eat daily to sustain the strength and vigor of the body, daily Communion is also necessary to maintain the supernatural life of the soul? Why did Christ Himself teach us to say many times during the day, "Give us this day our daily bread," if it was not His desire that we should eat it daily?

The Holy Father further explains the reason of his earnest desire to see all Catholics receive Holy Communion daily, in a brief of July 14, 1907, in which he tells us, that this practice is truly the shortest and surest way to obtain the salvation of every individual, man and woman, and of society at large.

Every individual is bound to work out his own salvation, and to use the safest and shortest way to reach his destiny; but he is also a member of the great human family, and as such he is obliged to labor for the welfare and salvation of every other member. What will save one will save all, and consequently save society itself. The social problem is a great and difficult one, but it is now definitely solved. Cease to rack your brain for impossible systems, ye lovers of your fellow-men and of humanity, listen to the Father of Christendom; return to the practice of the Gospel and resort to daily Communion. Nothing else will so surely and so promptly save society from impending ruin.

261. What should we do after Holy Communion?

After Holy Communion we should spend some time in adoring Our Lord, in thanking Him for the grace we have received, and in asking Him for the blessings we need.

In the preceding number there was question of daily Communion, and as all people without exception should turn to that salutary custom, since nothing can be a greater help to holiness, we should consider the Holy Eucharist as the center as well as the source of all good, around which all our daily actions ought to turn. Accordingly, we would do well to employ the half day preceding our daily Communion as a period of preparation, and the morning after our reception as a time of thanksgiving and of petition for the graces we need.

As a preparation, we may well ask ourselves: Who comes? Why does He come? To whom does He come? He is the omnipotent God, Who made me and the whole universe; He is a God of love, for He comes to enrich me and make His abode with me; He comes as a guest to give me His very life. Who am I but a miserable, sinful creature, unworthy of such honor? But He wills it; He chooses me as His host. Then say to Him: Lord, I am not worthy, but as Thou willest to come to me, prepare Thyself a dwelling worthy of Thee. In the midst of our ordinary occupations we should often think of what we need, and of what we shall ask of our divine Guest.

The moments that immediately follow our Communion are the most precious of our lives. Those are the moments when, after welcoming our heavenly Guest, after rendering Him homage due Him as Lord of Heaven and earth, and after thanking Him sincerely for His visit, we should address Him in numerous petitions, with childish trust in His bountiful love; for, says St. Teresa, the Divine Majesty is accustomed to pay well for His lodging to all those who give Him a cordial reception. Such and similar affections coming from our hearts ought to precede, accompany and follow our daily Communion.

Spiritual Communion. Devout souls understand the excellence of the gifts they receive in Holy Communion, for it is nothing else than to be incorporated in God and with God, and therefore they would fain receive their Lord, the Delight of their souls, many times a day. Now as that is not practicable, they are so inflamed with a lively "faith that worketh by charity," i. e., a lively faith united with burning charity, that they ardently yearn to receive the Holy Eucharist, and from this ardent desire they receive, if not all, at least a large share of the fruits of a worthy Communion, when it cannot be received in reality. (Trent, Sess. 13, On the Eucharist). This spiritual Communion consists in a lively faith in the Real Presence, an ardent love of the Blessed Sacrament, a perfect contrition for all past offenses and imperfections, an invitation addressed to our Lord to become the Guest of our soul, according to the devout wish of the Council, and finally a firm trust to obtain abundant graces through an affectionate union with the divine Guest. It can be made in all places and at all times, and it has always been one of the greatest delights of many saints.

Note about the permanence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist

Martin Bucer, an apostate Dominican, trying to reconcile Luther's notion of the Real Presence with that of the Sacramentarians, invented a new doctrine: he taught that Christ is present only when Holy Communion is actually received. Kemnitz admitted further that if Holy Communion is taken to the sick, Our Lord remains present until that Communion is given. This doctrine is in favor with some Episcopalians of our own day in these United States, to the great disgust and horror of many High-Church Episcopalians. Episcopalian bishops have been known to order that if their ministers on communion days find that there is consecrated bread left over, it should be simply thrown out into the yard.

Such a doctrine never found favor with Luther.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 13, Can. 4) condemned the innovation, when it said: "If anyone says that when consecration is perfected, the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ is

not yet present in the admirable Sacrament of the Eucharist, but that He is present only in the act of receiving it and not before or after, or that in the consecrated Host or particles that are reserved after communion or left over, the true body of Christ does not remain; let him be anathema."

It is needless to say how much Bucer's teaching about the permanence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist is contrary to the words of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. When Christ said: "This is My Body, This is My Blood," did not His words have their effect instantly? And as to the permanence of Our Lord in the Eucharist, so long as the species of bread and wine remain, our good sense, as well as the practice of the early Church in allowing the Christians to preserve the Holy Eucharist in their homes, condemns the innovation as contrary to Holy Scripture and Tradition. Even Calvin, although rejecting the Real Presence, admitted that the custom of preserving the Holy Eucharist and of carrying Communion to the sick is very ancient.

St. Cyril of Alexandria, successor to his uncle Theophilus in 412, teaches exactly our Catholic doctrine on the subject in one of his letters: "I hear that there are some who say that the Mystical Eulogy (Holy Eucharist) does not help towards sanctification, if any thing remains of it for another day. They that assert it are in error; for Christ is neither changed nor is His sacred body altered, but the power and faculty of benediction and the vivifying grace always remain in Him."

From St. Chrysostom (b. 344), writing to Innocent I about some soldiers who had broken into the tabernacle or place where the Sacrament was kept, we learn that it was customary to reserve the Holy Eucharist under both forms; for he asserts that even the precious blood of Christ was poured on the clothes of the soldiers.

The custom among the early Christians of carrying the Holy Eucharist to their homes and reserving it for daily Communion is abundantly proved by contemporary writers: viz., St. Irenæus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Basil, and other Fathers.

LESSON THE TWENTY-FOURTH

ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

262. When and where are the bread and wine changed into the body and blood of Christ?

The bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ at the consecration of the Mass.

The priest is not allowed on any pretext whatsoever to change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ through the words of consecration, except in the Mass. Our Lord Himself said the first Mass, but He performed only the most essential parts of the Sacrifice, leaving to the Church to add such ceremonies as might be apt to instill into the hearts of the priest and people affections and sentiments worthy of the sublime mystery. None of these ceremonies may be omitted, and if the priest foresees that he will not be able to conclude the Mass with all its ceremonies, he is not allowed to begin. We shall see later what must be done in case a priest should be physically unable to finish the Mass.

We call "consecration" what happens about the middle of the Mass, when the priest, using the words of Christ Himself, "This is My body; this is My blood" changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Our Saviour; for, to consecrate, when we speak of the Mass, is to convert the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ.

The words "consecration" and "transubstantiation" have nearly the same meaning, when applied to the principal part of the Mass; but consecration refers rather to the action of the priest, while the conversion he effects by God's power is called transubstantiation; hence in the Mass the consecration effects the transubstantiation.

263. What is the Mass?

The Mass is the unbloody sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ.

In the previous lesson we learned that the Holy Eucharist is a Sacrament, and now we are taught that it is also a Sacrifice; and we call that Sacrifice, the Mass.

By Holy Communion the recipient is incorporated with Christ and is so transformed into Him by daily or frequent Communion, that he may be said to live the life of Christ. It seems due to the majesty and justice

of God that besides the Sacraments, there should be a means to satisfy God's justice for the numberless sins that are committed daily, which not only are an obstacle to our union with Christ but also demand satisfaction. Moreover our natural reason tells us that there should be a rite to acknowledge our dependence on God for all we are and for all we possess. Surely the Christian religion cannot be inferior in this respect to the primitive law and the Mosaic law.

The good God will not save us without our co-operation. He has made us the promise to forgive our sins in the Sacrament of Penance, if we have recourse to it with proper dispositions; but what hand stays the justice of God before our repentance? Why is the sinner not struck dead in the act of sinning mortally? Simply because Christ daily sacrifices Himself for our sake, and as God and Man pleads every instant for sinners, when He is immolated on our altars, and when millions of the brethren of sinners join their supplications with His. The hardened sinner alone is rejected; for the least devotion in the supplicating sinner will draw down God's mercy through the merits of the divine Victim. This reflection will bring us to an understanding of the Mass as the unbloody Sacrifice of the New Law; for the Victim is of sufficient worth to honor God more than He is dishonored by the united sins of the whole world.

264. What is a sacrifice?

A sacrifice is the offering of an object by a priest to God, and the consuming of it to acknowledge that He is the Creator and Lord of all things.

This definition applies to all sacrifices acceptable to God, and therefore it applies to the Mass, the unbloody Sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ.

A sacrifice in the strict sense of the word is:

1. An offering of an object, i. e., of a sensible thing, falling under our senses, for sacrifice regards the exterior and public worship of God. Animals, fruits, bread, wine, oil, etc., are proper offerings.

2. To God and to God alone; for the principal end of a sacrifice is to acknowledge that God has supreme dominion over all things, and to recognize our absolute dependence on Him. He is the absolute Lord of heaven

and earth. A sacrifice cannot be offered to a mere creature, no matter how perfect.

3. By a priest; for there must be an authority to represent the people in a public offering. There is no worthy sacrifice without a priest, and there is no priest without a sacrifice. In the primitive law, or the law of nature, the patriarchs or heads of families offered up sacrifices and in the Mosaic or Old Law, Aaron and his descendents were alone among the tribe of Levi allowed to exercise the priestly functions. In the New Law the priests among the clergy are the only legitimate sacrificers. To the Apostles alone did Christ say: "Do this for a commemoration of Me." Priests at their ordination receive the same power and the same authority from the successors of the Apostles, the bishops of the Catholic Church.

We shall see later that only the priest is the visible and public minister of the Sacrifice of the New Law; yet his office is only secondary, for he acts in the Mass in the name of Christ, Who is the principal and invisible Sacrificer or Priest.

4. And the consuming of the offering. This point regards the manner of the offering, which in the sacrifice of the primitive or natural law, as well as in the Mosaic Law, was different either regarding the object offered, or regarding the ends of the sacrifice.

We then attest and proclaim by the sacrifice of any object God's dominion over that object, when in attestation thereof we destroy it, consume it, or annihilate it as far as we can. The destruction is called physical destruction when animals are killed by the knife or otherwise, and moral destruction or simple alteration or transformation, when objects are made unfit for their ordinary use, e. g., when oil or wine is poured out in libations.

The Mosaic Sacrifice. The sacrifices of the Old Law were many and of various kinds. Some were offered every day, some on the many feasts and solemnities, like that of the Paschal Lamb which was eaten only once a year.

Many also were the different objects offered, such as immolations of victims or hosts, viz., heifers, oxen, sheep, goats

and lambs, and libations of fruits, oils, wines, bread, etc. The manner of offering differed likewise according to the end in view; and among the different methods of sacrifice we should especially mention:

(a) The sacrifice called "holocaust." In this the victim was reduced, after being killed, to smoke and ashes, for nothing was reserved for the use of the priest or for those that made the offering. This was of all the sacrifices the most perfect.

(b) The peace-offering, in which the victim after its immolation was divided into three parts: one was burned in honor of God; one part went to the priest, and one part to the offerers.

(c) The eucharistic sacrifice had for object to give thanks to God for benefits obtained. Here also, as in the preceding, the victim was divided into three parts.

(d) The impetratory sacrifice was established to obtain new favors from God. The same ceremony of division was observed as in the preceding sacrifice.

(e) The propitiatory sacrifice or sin-offering had for object and end to obtain the remission of sins. In it the victim, when slain, was divided into two parts: portions were burned, as in the holocaust, and other portions were reserved for the priest.

All these sacrifices were but the figure of the one Sacrifice of the New Law which was to replace the old sacrifices: the time was to come, when according to the Prophet Malachy, the Mosaic sacrifice would no longer find acceptance in God's sight: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts; and I will not receive a gift of your hand; for from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is a sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation." (Mal. i. 10, 11).

God has always demanded sacrifices from man after the fall of Adam and Eve; this fact is sufficiently established by the evidence of the sacrifices of Cain, Abel, Melchisedech, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and by the tradition of the Jewish people. The next step will be to prove that Christ's death on the cross was a true Sacrifice, and lastly we shall show that the Mass is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross, but offered in an unbloody manner.

265. Is the Mass the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross?

The Mass is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross.

When we are told that the Mass is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross, we naturally inquire if the

death of Christ on the cross was a true sacrifice. We know that the Saviour willed to die and that He chose the time and place. When His time had not yet come, He escaped from the hands of the Jews who sought His death. He foretold His passion to His Apostles and the manner of His death, and when the time He had chosen had arrived, He was led as a meek lamb to the slaughter. Then was verified the prediction of Isaias (liii. 7): "He was offered because it was His own will, and He opened not His mouth: He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter."

Although Christ could not have sought His own life, nor could He have advised or have instigated others to pronounce His judgment and execute His death warrant, He could submit to it freely by willingly accepting death-sentence and death itself from His executioners, although He was free to escape them if He so chose. He became the chief Sacrificer and true Priest as well as a willing Victim, and He freely and voluntarily offered His death to His eternal Father as a satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. He was wounded for our iniquities. He was bruised for our sins. . . . And by His bruises we are healed." (Ibid. liii. 5). St. Paul (Eph. v. 2) also clearly teaches the same truth, when he says: "Christ also loved us, and has delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness." No need of insisting further on the subject for the whole economy of the Christian religion rests on the sacrifice which Christ freely made of His life to save us from sin and hell.

We have then in the Sacrifice of the Cross all that is necessary to constitute a sacrifice: 1, a priest fully authorized, Christ Himself; 2, a sensible victim, the sacred humanity of Christ, but a Victim of infinite value, because He is also God; and 3, a sacrifice offered by the High Priest of Himself, Who by delivering His brethren in the flesh from sin, established a kingdom of God upon earth, for He sought primarily in all He did the will of His Father in heaven and the entire subjection of man to His Father's dominion.

266. How is the Mass the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross?

The Mass is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross, because the offering and the Priest are the same, Christ Our Blessed Lord; and the ends, for which the Sacrifice of the Mass is offered, are the same as those of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

As we propose to follow the order of the catechism, our explanation will comprise: 1st, the doctrine of the Church that the Mass is a true Sacrifice of the New Law and is none other than the Sacrifice of the Cross. These two points form the subject of the present number; 2nd, that the ends for which the Sacrifice of the Mass is offered are the same as those of the Cross. This point will form the subject of the next number; and 3rd, in a subsequent number we will show in what the two Sacrifices differ.

That the Mass is a true Sacrifice is clearly set forth in the definition of the Council of Trent (Sess. 22, Can. 1): "If any one says that a true and real sacrifice is not offered in the Mass, or that to be offered is nothing else than to give us Christ to be eaten, let him be anathema." This definition condemns the contrary doctrine, or doctrine opposed to that of the Catholic Church, which teaches that the Mass is a true and real Sacrifice; but the Fathers of the Council explain their meaning further, by teaching us that Our Lord on the cross offered Himself to His eternal Father by the shedding of His blood, while in the Mass He does so in an unbloody manner. They affirm also that the Mass is a truly propitiatory Sacrifice and that through it we find mercy, grace and help, if we have recourse to it in the proper spirit. The Council likewise teaches that, through the ministry of the priest, the same Host or Victim is offered in the Mass, that was offered on Calvary; that the manner of the Sacrifice alone is different; that through the Mass the fruits of the bloody Sacrifice are abundantly bestowed; that the Mass does not detract anything from the merits of the Sacrifice of the Cross; and, finally, that the unbloody Sacrifice can be offered for the necessities of the living as well as for the dead who die in the state of sanctifying grace, but who are not entirely purified.

From Holy Scripture and Tradition we learn also that the New Law of Grace has a true sensible Sacrifice and not merely a representation of the Sacrifice of

the Cross or a mere spiritual sacrifice, as most Protestants maintain.

The Psalmist represents the Father as saying to His Son: "Thou art a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech." St. Paul holds that this passage refers to Christ. (Heb. v. 5).

Who was Melchisedech? He was a priest of the Most High, who offered up bread and wine in thanksgiving for Abraham's victory over the enemies of Lot, his nephew. (Gen. xiv. 18). Melchisedech's offering of bread and wine was a sacrifice; he was a true priest, and so was Christ when He instituted the Holy Eucharist, and so were the Apostles and their successors; but although Christ commissioned His Apostles to do what He had done at the Last Supper, He still remains the principal Sacrificer or Priest, for in the Mass the priest of the Church acts only in the name of Christ.

All the Fathers of the Church, St. Cyprian, St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Jerome, etc., who have interpreted the meaning of the citation from the psalm of David, quoted above, have seen in the sacrifice of Melchisedech the type and figure of the Sacrifice established by our High Priest, the Saviour, on the night before He died.

The words used by Christ Himself at the Last Supper attest that He meant to offer up a sacrifice, for after the consecration of the bread by the words, "This is My body," He added: "that shall be delivered for you," i. e., unto death; and likewise, after the consecration of the wine, by the words, "This is My blood," He added: "that shall be shed for you," i. e., on the cross. Several Oxford divines and Anglican bishops have been forced to recognize in the words of Christ, when He instituted the Holy Eucharist, the design of a true and real sacrifice.

We omit the text from St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians (1 Cor. x. 16) and to the Hebrews (xiii. 10), because these texts require a more lengthy explanation that is beyond the scope of the present work; although, if taken in connection with other passages of Holy Writ, they clearly establish our proposition.

In the argument of Tradition we have first, the ancient liturgies of St. James, of St. Mark, of St. Basil, of the Nestorians and of the Copts, and finally the Roman liturgy; and we find in all of them references to a true Sacrifice, in their prayers and ceremonies. Besides, when we compare those very ancient liturgies with the writings of the early Fathers, from St. Clement of Rome, a contemporary of the Apostles, to St. Augustine and St. Gregory the Great, we are forced to admit that the Church, from the earliest Apostolic times, has always laid claim to a true Sacrifice. This absolute conviction is further corroborated

by the unanimous teachings of all the heretical and schismatic churches in the East, who have always tenaciously held that they too possess the same Sacrifice, which Christ first offered at the Last Supper, and which is none other than the Sacrifice of the Cross.

We finally come to the argument of prescription. It is known to all that wherever there is a Catholic priest, be it in the remotest part of the world, he offers up the Sacrifice of the Mass and believes it to be a real and true Sacrifice. This was true also when Luther and Calvin and the other heretics of the sixteenth century rejected the Mass as a mere useless ceremony. If this universal practice of celebrating the divine mysteries has not come down to us from the Apostles and Christ, who first introduced it, who was its author? and who was the first to impose his will upon the early Christians and upon the clergy of the Church? Undoubtedly history should record such a strange innovation. If there is no trace of the extraordinary introduction, we are forced to conclude that Christ Himself is the Author of the rite of the Mass as to its essential parts.

In what, according to Catholic doctrine, does the essence of the Sacrifice of the Mass consist? The Council of Trent has been quoted to prove that it is not only a representation of the Sacrifice of the Cross and a commemoration of what Christ did at the Last Supper, when He instituted the Holy Eucharist, but that it is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross. Christ Himself, as we said before, is the Victim as well as the Priest; but how can it be called a sacrifice, if Christ cannot die any more? Is it not necessary for a sacrifice that the offering should be destroyed? It is sufficient that a change takes place,as in the offering of the bread, oil, wine, etc., as also in the case of the scape-goat (Lev. xvi. 10), on the head of which were symbolically placed the sins of the people and which was afterwards sent adrift into the wilderness. By the words of consecration, pronounced separately over the bread and wine, the Saviour is placed under the figure of death; for Christ's body is symbolically separated from His blood under the separate species of the bread and wine, and it is under this figure of death and this representation of His expiration on the Cross, that He offers Himself to His eternal Father and pleads our cause.

From what has been said we may conclude that the essence of the Sacrifice consists in the separate consecration of the bread and wine, and that Communion, although an integral part of the Sacrifice, is not essential to it; for in the consecration alone of both species of bread and wine, we find all that is required for a true sacrifice. Still, who does not see that Communion in the Mass intensifies the state of humiliation, and mystical death of the sacred Victim by the consumption of the

species of bread and wine under which the Saviour is really present. The Sacrifice is consummated through consecration, but perfected and completed, when neither the species of bread and wine, under which the Victim is sacrificed, nor the Victim Himself remains on the altar.

267. Which were the ends for which the Sacrifice of the Cross was offered?

The ends for which the Sacrifice of the Cross was offered were: 1st, to honor and glorify God; 2nd, to thank Him for all the graces bestowed on the world; 3rd, to satisfy God's justice for the sins of man; 4th, to obtain all graces and blessings.

All the sacrifices of the Old Law were but figures of the Sacrifice of the Cross and of the Mass, to which its merits are applied, and which, according to the Prophet Malachy, was to take the place of all the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law.

In No. 264, we have briefly stated the nature of the principal sacrifices of the Old Law, the manner of offering them and their several objects and ends.

The ends of all the sacrifices may be reduced to four principal ones: 1st, to recognize the absolute dominion of God over all created things. The most perfect sacrifice with this end in view was the holocaust or burnt-offering, in which the victim was wholly consumed by fire; 2nd, the propitiatory sacrifice, or sin-offering, to placate the justice of God and to obtain mercy; 3rd, the impetratory sacrifice to obtain new favors from God; 4th, the eucharistic sacrifice to thank God for favors received.

The sacrifice of Melchisedech was primarily a eucharistic sacrifice, and several sacrifices of the Mosaic Law, such as offerings of fruits, flour, bread, etc., and the libations of wine and oil (Lev. vii. 12) were certainly not bloody sacrifices.

All these sacrifices, with respect to the end for which they were offered, find their counterpart in the sublime Sacrifice of the Cross and also in the Sacrifice of the Mass. The Sacrifice of the Cross was the true Holocaust, in which the Saviour, Who had come down into the world to do in all things the will of His Father, spilled the last drop of His blood and offered up

His life to the Supreme Majesty; it was a propitiatory Sacrifice, because He died so that we who were dead by sin, might live; and the merit of the Sacrifice being of infinite value, His death abundantly satisfied for all the sins of man; the Sacrifice was also impetratory, for the graces to be attached to good works, to prayer, to the Sacraments, and to the Mass, received their saving power from the precious blood of the God-Man; it was finally a eucharistic Sacrifice or a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, for He referred all His actions to His Father, and His whole life was a continuous thanksgiving. He taught us during His mortal life the necessity of gratitude for favors received, and just before He instituted the Blessed Sacrament, He gave thanks to His Father. Now we have learned that the Sacrifice of the Cross, of the Mass and the Sacrifice of the Last Supper are essentially alike, and hence we must conclude that Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross was also a true eucharistic sacrifice.

268. Is there any difference between the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass?

Yes; the manner in which the sacrifice is offered is different. On the cross Christ really shed His blood and was really slain; in the Mass there is no real shedding of blood nor real death, because Christ can die no more; but the Sacrifice of the Mass, through the separate consecration of the bread and wine, represents His death on the cross.

Having understood that the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass are the same, we must believe the teaching of the Council of Trent, that as Christ died only once and can die no more, the manner of offering the two Sacrifices is different: for in the Mass "there is immolated in an unbloody manner the same Jesus Christ, Who on the altar of the Cross immolated Himself in a bloody manner."

As this point of our holy doctrine on the Mass has been sufficiently explained in No. 266, we may conclude this subject with the sentiments of the great Bossuet in his "Exposition of Catholic Doctrine." "Such is the Sacrifice of the Christians, infinitely different from the sacrifice of the Old Law. It is a spiritual Sacrifice, worthy of the new covenant, in which the Victim is discovered only by faith, in which the sword is the word that mystically separates the body and blood, in which the blood is therefore spilled only mysteriously, and in which death intervenes only by representation. Nevertheless it is a true Sacrifice because Jesus Christ, Who is contained in it, is presented to God under the figure of death. Likewise it is a

commemorative Sacrifice, which, far from detracting from the Sacrifice of the Cross, as heretics object, borrows all its excellence and its merits from the bloody Sacrifice of the Cross; and these merits being of an infinite value, are applied to us according to our dispositions, in the many unbloody Sacrifices of the Mass throughout the world."

269. How should we assist at Mass?

We should assist at Mass with great interior recollection and piety and with every outward mark of devotion.

The catechism here speaks of two dispositions, interior and exterior, required to assist at Mass in a suitable manner: recollection of the mind and filial piety of the heart spring from the proper knowledge and estimation one has of the wondrous Sacrifice, and the outward respect and devotion are sure to follow.

The Holy Eucharist considered as a Sacrifice is preeminently:

1. A sacrifice of latria, i. e., a worship to honor and reverence the Divine Majesty and to recognize the supreme dominion of God over all creatures. "Behold God is great, exceeding our knowledge." (Job. xxxvi. 26).

Let us recall what we have learned about the sacrifices of the Old Law by the immolation and destruction of the victim. Now if the victims of the Mosaic sacrifices were acceptable to God, who shall estimate the worth and the dignity of the sacred Victim of the New Law, a Victim of infinite value, as It is none other than Christ, the God-Man? O Supreme Lord, at Whose feet a Victim of infinite value dies mysteriously, how incomprehensible is Thy greatness! My reason reveals to me that no created being can render adequate reverence to the Infinite Majesty, to the Being of beings, the absolute and necessary Being, Who alone is self-existent and Who cannot be honored as He deserves save by a Being of infinite perfection. This honor and worship can, therefore, be rendered only by a Person of the Blessed Trinity; and thus the Son of God can render the reverence due to God in a sensible sacrifice, as He alone became visible through the Incarnation. O Christian Soul, when assisting at the Holy Sacrifice dwell in your thoughts on the greatness of God, Who can say of Himself: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things; I am Who am," and you will always find new charms, new beauties and new perfections in God and new reasons to imitate Our

Lord by abasing yourself and by adoring and reverencing a God so great and lovable.

As a fruit of the sacrifice of latria, we ought to resolve to submit ourselves in all things to the will of God. "It is the Lord, let Him do what is good in His sight." (1 Kings iii. 18). How gladly we ought to serve a Master, Whom Christ served on earth all the days of His life but especially by His death!

2. In the Mass we ought to associate ourselves with Christ offering to His Father a propitiatory Sacrifice, i. e., a Sacrifice of expiation for all sins committed by ourselves and others.

Faith teaches us that sin is the greatest evil in the world, as it is an offense against God Who is worthy of all our love and veneration. The true Christian sincerely grieves over it and he would willingly sacrifice himself to blot out the insults to God perpetrated by the sinner's disobedience to God's holy will. How a pious and loving soul seeks to repair the base offenses and shameful rebellion of men and their criminal ingratitude! The devout and tender hearts of the saints felt such pain and sorrow at the sight of the ingratitude of mankind, that they suffered the pangs of death at the thought of the many indignities offered to God at the hands of His rebellious children. But they found in the Holy Sacrifice, to their great consolation, a means to expiate all these offenses and to repair abundantly God's despised honor.

In the Mass Jesus cries aloud to His Eternal Father for mercy and pardon in behalf of sinners; and as man by himself cannot avert the scourge of the just anger of God, the Saviour places Himself between the justice of His Father and the offending criminal, by offering His death again and again as an expiation for the offenses of a sinful world and as a reparation of the indignities which God suffers from man's wickedness.

When we look upon the Mass as a sacrifice of expiation, we are confronted with a double duty, the duty of satisfaction and reparation for our sins and the sins of our fellow-men as well, and the duty of compassion for the suffering souls in Purgatory. These suffering souls cannot gain or lose merit, since judgment was pronounced upon them at the moment of their death; but as they no less than our brethren upon earth, are members of the Communion of Saints, the Supreme Judge of the living and the dead, graciously makes the merits of our good actions and, above all, the merits of the Sacrifice of the Mass available for the remission of the temporal punishment due to their sins. So this august Sacrifice expiates our own sins and the sins of our neighbor, and avails likewise for alleviating or shortening the punishment of the suffering souls. Does not routine or inadvertence make us sometimes forget the infinite treasures of the Mass and our serious duties as members of the mystical body of Christ? Too many, alas! forget

to associate themselves with the divine Victim, and so lose the great opportunity of satisfying for their own sins and for the sins of others.

3. When assisting at Mass, we should not forget that it is also an impetratory Sacrifice, or a Sacrifice of petition and of prayer, yea, of a prayer that pierces the clouds and reaches the heart of God.

The efficacy of the sacrificial prayer to obtain any favor from God, not only rests upon the promise of Christ, when He said: "Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you" (John xvi. 23), but it rests besides upon the certainty that the Father can refuse no request made by His Son, for He Himself says to His Father: "Thou hearest Me always" (John xi. 42). If that is always true, can there by any question that, when the Son presents Himself in the most humble manner, i. e., in the figure or representation of death before His eternal Father, He will infallibly be heard? Can we waver in the least in our trustful confidence that we shall obtain what we ask, when Christ Himself joins us in our requests? Truly, our trustful prayer forces, as it were, the heart of God, when we ask Him a grace in return for His own Son, Whom we present to Him in oblation and thus offer more than we can receive. If we have not received all that we have asked, we must undoubtedly attribute it to our coldness or indifference, or to a want of confidence in God's goodness and mercy; for our plea joined to the prayer of a divine Victim is all-powerful, if we pray aright.

4. Who can estimate all that we owe to God, the favors for which we ought to give suitable thanks? (a) We owe to God our existence and the creation of the universe and all that exists in the world in which we dwell and in the many worlds around us, for they were made for man. (b) We owe to our Maker our preservation and the preservation of all things we admire and enjoy, for it may be called a continuous creation. (c) We owe to God not only all we are and all we have in the natural order, but also the blessings of the spiritual order, which outshine all the works of God in the material world. We are created to the image and likeness of God and are destined for a union with Him, yea, created but little below the blessed spirits in heaven. (d) When our first parents fell from grace and through them we lost innocence and holiness, a Redeemer was promised to reinstate us in our former dignity. (e) In the Incarnation, what did it not cost to redeem us? Recount if you can all what God has done for us in the supernatural order: the birth of the Son of God, His holy life and the example He has set us in the practice of the most sublime virtues, His heavenly doctrine, the grace of the Sacraments, the insti-

tution of the Church, His sufferings and His death upon a cross to complete our redemption, the sending of the Holy Ghost to abide with His Church and to make a tabernacle for Himself in our very souls. Before leaving this world in obedience to the command of His Father, the Son of God instituted the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in order to remain always with us, to be our daily food; and as He understood our weakness and propensity to evil, He perpetuated in the Mass the Sacrifice of the Cross, so that He might in our stead give due worship to God, satisfy for our daily offenses, stay the avenging arm of His Father's justice, intercede without ceasing in our behalf and offer a continual sacrifice of thanksgiving for all the blessings, temporal and spiritual, bestowed upon the world from the time that the Blessed Trinity spoke, "Let Us make man to Our image and likeness," until the end of time.

How shall we repay the Lord for all His gifts? We are poor and miserable and have nothing to offer but a sinful if gratefult heart at best; but in the Mass, we have the Sacrifice of thanksgiving, and the means to more than compensate our good Father for all He has given us. We can offer the loving Sacred Heart of His Son, of an infinitely greater value than all the blessings already bestowed or that ever will be bestowed upon the whole human family.

It behooves us then to associate ouselves with our Blessed Lord, whenever we assist at Mass in order to offer up with Him the gift most acceptable to our Father in heaven, viz., His only-begotten Son.

We can see now with what sentiments we ought to assist at Mass. We ought to bring to the Sacrifice a lively faith in the Real Presence on our altars and in the eminent value and worth of the Sacrifice, convinced, as we should be, that it is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross, and awed by the consciousness that myriad angels kneel in adoration around us. We should also have a great zeal for the honor and glory of God, for our own sanctification and for the welfare of our neighbor, a great reverence for God and submission to the Divine Majesty, of which the Saviour gives us such a perfect example in the Mass, and finally an ardent love of our Saviour and sincere gratitude for the inexhaustible treasure of graces attached to the Sacrifice.

With such sentiments of adoration, filial love, deep reverence and gratitude, although fully aware of our unworthiness and misery, but fully trusting in God's goodness and mercy, we shall not feel it very difficult

to remove all distractions, and we shall spend our time most profitably in union with our Blessed Lord. Our outward appearance will bespeak the inner feelings of our soul, and the inward sentiments of respect and devotion will be evidenced in our humble and reverential attitude.

270. Which is the best manner of hearing Mass?

The best manner of hearing Mass is to offer it to God with the priest for the same purpose for which it is said, to meditate on Christ's sufferings and death, and to go to Holy Communion.

In the preceding number we have given an excellent and profitable manner of assisting at Mass, which consists in joining our Saviour Himself in all the sentiments that prompted Him to renew the Sacrifice of the Cross on our altars. Here the catechism details an easier method which is comparatively simple and serviceable; but which, if well understood will be found to contain all intentions and purposes set forth in the last number.

Indeed when we see the vested priest going up to the altar to begin Mass, even the most ignorant among us know that he is about to commence the greatest act of public worship in the Church, and that what is called the Mass is something that honors God and is acceptable to Him. Almost all know likewise that in the Mass bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ and that Communion is the receiving of the body and blood of our Saviour. All those that are able to read have learned something more about the holy sacrifice; but few among the unlettered know anything of the ends for which the Sacrifice of the Mass was instituted. If such people offer up the Mass for the same purposes for which it is said by the priest, their intentions are implicitly the same as those explained in the preceding number; for the priest necessarily offers it up for the living and the dead and for the ends Christ Himself, as the High Priest, offers it; although he may, as far as he can, apply the merits of the Mass to some particular persons or for some particular purpose.

It would be well also that every person assisting at Mass should have a special intention of his own, viz., to obtain some special favor, blessing or grace for himself or for those dear to him or to satisfy for his past sins, and no one should forget the needs of the suffering souls.

The catechism further says that a good manner of assisting at Mass is to meditate on the passion and death of Christ. This method is greatly to be recommended to all who can meditate, especially so, if they connect the sufferings and death of the Saviour with His sentiments in the Mass, which commemorates the sufferings and death of Christ, or as St. Paul says, shows the death of the Lord until He come again, i. e., on the last day to judge the living and the dead.

Finally the last and most profitable manner of hearing Mass is to go to Holy Communion. It is the most perfect manner of identifying ourselves with the priest at the altar and through him with Christ, the High Priest and the Victim. If one cannot go to the sacramental Communion, a spiritual Communion should take its place, for, as the Council of Trent teaches, it bestows upon the zealous soul many, if not all, of the graces of a sacramental Communion.

LESSON THE TWENTY-FIFTH

ON EXTREME UNCTION AND HOLY ORDERS

271. What is the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?

Extreme Unction is the Sacrament which, through the anointing and prayer of the priest, gives health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when we are in danger of death from sickness.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 14) has four canons on the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. In the first it condemns the errors of the Protestants who deny that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament instituted by Christ, and promulgated by the blessed Apostle James, but deem it only a rite received from the Fathers or even an unprofitable invention.

In the second, by condemning the contrary doctrine, it teaches that Extreme Unction confers grace, remits sin and relieves the sick and that it is not the grace of working cures.

In the third, it teaches in like manner that Extreme Unction, as administered in the Church, is not repugnant to the sentiments of St. James and cannot be contemned without sin.

In the fourth, it teaches that the priest ordained by a bishop is the minister of the Sacrament.

The text of St. James referred to in those decrees is as follows: "Is anyone sick among you, let him bring in the priests of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James v. 14, 15).

The doctrine of the Church on Extreme Unction is easily deduced from this quotation of St. James and from anathemas of the Council of Trent. We will show: 1st, that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament; 2nd, we will consider its matter; 3rd, we will consider its form; and in additional numbers we will consider the minister and the subject of the Sacrament, its effects, and the dispositions required by the recipient.

Why is the name "Extreme Unction" given to this Sacrament? Because, says the Roman Catechism, it is administered to those who are in danger of death; or because there are many unctions in the Church of Christ, e. g., in Baptism, Confirmation and in Holy Orders, and Extreme Unction is the last of all; or because this Sacrament is the last one received, and therefore the Council of Trent calls it "the Sacrament of the Departing," i. e., of the departing from this world.

The Council of Trent teaches that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament instituted by Christ; and this necessarily follows from its promulgation by St. James, for it has an outward sign and confers grace. Hence it must have been instituted by Christ, Who alone can attach grace to sensible signs.

There is no record, either in Scripture or in the early tradition of the Church, regarding the time Extreme Unction was instituted. Since it seems, however, to be a complement of the Sacrament of Penance, it is more than probable that it was instituted by our Lord after His resurrection; for it does not appear fitting that Christ should have instituted it before the Sacrament of Penance. Hence, we may infer that it was

instituted during the forty days that intervened between our Lord's resurrection and His ascension. It seems also certain that Christ left it to the Church to determine the manner of the unction and the prayers to be recited.

Some heretics have alleged, because no mention is made in the Gospel of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, that it is a mere ceremony of the Church, as Luther maintained, or a mere invention, according to Calvin. But that objection has no weight, for neither is Confirmation mentioned in the Gospel. Our Lord said and did many things not recorded in Holy Scripture. The Evangelists principally took care to teach what was necessary unto salvation and what regards the constitution of the Church, and hence they related the institution by Christ of Baptism, Holy Eucharist, and Holy Orders, rather than of Confirmation and Extreme Unction; for neither Confirmation nor Extreme Unction is necessary unto salvation. (St. Thos. Suppl., q. 29, a. 3 to 1). In the first Ecumenical Councils of the Church, the decrees and condemnations regard only the doctrines that were denied by early heretics, and the same reason explains why but few of the early Fathers of the Church touch upon Extreme Unction. Eusebius, St. Chrysostom and Innocent I. mention it: the first two in connection with Penance, and they attribute to it the remission of sins; and Innocent I, in the beginning of the fifth century, having been asked if a bishop could give this Sacrament, answered that what a priest can do, a bishop can do likewise, as he consecrates the oils for the Sacrament.

All oriental churches teach with the Catholic Church that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament, and their sacramentaries or rituals agree with the rituals of the Latin Church; for although the prayers, prescribed for the unction, are somewhat different, the meaning of the prayers is essentially the same in all the Eastern and Latin churches.

We may add also the argument of prescription, for at the time when Luther rejected the Sacrament, and, in order to be consistent, called the Epistle of St. James "an Epistle of straw," at the time when Calvin called the Sacrament a human invention, all the Christians of the world, including those of the oriental rites, taught that Extreme Unction is a real Sacrament, and the rite of administering it was practiced in all Catholic parishes. If we cannot determine the time of its first introduction into the Church or name its author, we must conclude that Christ instituted it, and that the Apostles promulgated it and practiced it.

272. When should we receive Extreme Unction?

We should receive Extreme Unction when we are in danger of death from sickness or from a wound or accident.

Three conditions are required to receive the Sacrament validly: To be baptized, to have arrived at the use of reason, and to be in danger of death.

The Sacrament can be given validly only to those in danger of death from sickness, accident or wound; for the expression "is sick" of the Douay text, in the quotation from St. James given above, does not seem to express sufficiently the idea conveyed by the Greek text, which denotes one who is weak from sickness or is seriously sick.

We shall find another argument for the fitness of the Sacrament, if we consider how lavish Our Lord has been in bestowing help and succor on us in all our needs. Is it possible that our loving Father, Who watches over us and assists us from the cradle throughout our lives in all conditions of life, would abandon us in that last struggle against the enemies of our salvation on which our eternity depends?

We learn from St. James in the text above quoted, that the matter of the Sacrament is the anointing with oil, i. e., with olive oil which was of frequent use among the Jewish people for light, food and medicine. Olive oil is then the remote matter of the Sacrament, and it is required for the validity that the oil be blest by the bishop. (St. Thos. Suppl. q. 29, a. 6).

Let it be noted besides that the bishop on Holy Thursday blesses two kinds of oil, besides the chrism for Confirmation: one called the oil of catechumens, used in the ceremonies of Baptism, and the other called the oil of the sick. For Extreme Unction the priest must use the oil of the sick; but in case of necessity, when the proper oil is not at hand, he may use the oil of catechumens, blest by the bishop. In the latter case, however, he must repeat the whole ceremony, if he have the oil of the sick on hand before the person dies.

The priests of the Greek rite, whether schismatics or uniats, have the Pope's permission to bless their own oils.

The unction with oil signifies the sacramental grace bestowed on the sick, as we shall see in No. 274.

The prayer of the priest is the form of the Sacrament, and both the unction with oil and the form or prayer constitute its sensible sign.

It seems that although the Sacrament was instituted by Christ, He left it to His Church to determine the exact form of the prayer. In the Latin Church the form is: "Through this sacred unction and His loving mercy, may God forgive whatever sins thou hast committed by sight, by hearing, by smell, by taste, by touch, and by step." Meanwhile the eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands and feet are anointed. The unction of the feet, however, may be omitted for any reasonable cause.

Although the text of St. James does not clearly specify the kind of danger that is required for the reception of the Sacrament, whether it is to be grave or not, the Church has always taught that Extreme Unction can be given only to those in danger of death from sickness, wound or accident, i. e., in a serious illness whatever may be its cause, if the recipient can be regarded as well-disposed.

Besides, to receive Extreme Unction, the recipient must be baptized, must have had at some time the use of reason, and have at least a habitual and implicit intention to receive the Sacrament. Hence infants and the insane who have never had the use of reason, cannot receive the Sacrament, and the same must be said of those who have been sentenced to death and of the soldiers who go into battle.

The Council of Florence also warns us that Extreme Unction must not be given to the sick of whose death there is no fear.

How often may Extreme Unction be received? But once in the same sickness, whether the sickness comes from one or several causes. If the patient recovers sufficiently, so that he may be said to be out of danger, and if afterwards he has a relapse, or if a new complication

or new sickness sets in, so that he is again in danger, he may and should receive the Sacrament the second time, and as often as the danger has passed and a new danger arises. The reason for the repetition is that the sacramental graces of Extreme Unction produce their effects only as long as the danger lasts. These effects are to strengthen the patient at the last hour against the dreadful attacks of the evil one, to remove the torpor and languor and other remains of the previous sins, as well as to dispel the fear of the last agony and of the judgment to come; to inspire the patient with trust in God's mercy, to give peace and tranquility to his soul and a perfect resignation to the will of God; finally to dispose the patient for a happy death, or to restore him to health if God sees fit.

273. Should we wait until we are in extreme danger before we receive Extreme Unction?

We should not wait until we are in extreme danger before we receive Extreme Unction, but, if possible, we should receive it whilst we have the use of our senses.

People should not wait before they receive the Sacrament or before they procure it for others, until the danger is imminent or extreme. The Roman catechism teaches that it is a grievous sin to observe the patient's condition and delay the administration of Extreme Unction until the sick person is destitute of his senses and is at the point of death.

A probable danger of death is sufficient, and as many are saved through the Sacrament, who without it would be lost, it should be received as soon as one is seriously ill the Viaticum can be administered.

Relatives and friends of a sick person are very much to be blamed, if they keep the patient in ignorance of his danger and do not see to it that Extreme Unction be administered in time through fear of disclosing

to the patient the truth of his danger, may aggravate his sickness. What is still more unpardonable, is the ignorance of those who think that when the Sacrament has been administered, the patient is sure to die. They should know that Extreme Unction not only remits sin, but also often restores the sick to health? Do they expect a miracle from God to raise up the dying at the last moment?

Those that defer receiving Extreme Unction until death becomes imminent and morally certain, deceive themselves in three ways: 1st, by depriving themselves of some of the graces conferred by the Sacrament, because the weaker the sick become, the less will be their fervor and in consequence the fewer the graces they will receive; 2nd, they will deprive themselves entirely of the sacramental grace, if death should occur meanwhile; and 3rd, by waiting until the last moment, they make the Sacrament void as to its secondary effects, i. e., that of restoring the sick to health.

This consideration also shows how cruel is the negligence of friends and relatives, who do not send in time for a priest, and who through false affection may rob the patient of the only medicine for his restoration to health. Besides, they may possibly deprive him of the mercy of God, which alone would have saved the sick man from eternal perdition. What fearful disclosures on the day of judgment shall cause careless and indifferent Catholics to shudder and tremble for fear of the wrath to come!

274. What are the effects of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?

The effects of Extreme Unction are: 1st, to comfort us in the pains of sickness and to strengthen us against temptation; 2nd, to remit venial sin and to cleanse our soul from the remains of sin; 3rd, to restore us to health, if God sees fit.

The Council of Trent teaches that the effects of Extreme Unction are: 1, to confer grace; 2, to forgive sins; 3, to relieve the sickness. 1. Extreme Unction is a Sacrament of the Living, and therefore it was not primarily instituted for the forgiveness of mortal sin.

Hence by its very nature it gives the "second" grace, i. e., an increase of sanctifying grace.

2. (a) Extreme Unction destroys the remains of sins, and what is meant by the remains of sins will be explained in the next number. (b) It also forgives venial sins, and even mortal sin, if the patient is not conscious of being in the state of mortal sin, or if having had such consciousness but having had attrition only, he has not had the opportunity of confessing his sins, as may happen in the case of an accident, a stroke of apoplexy, etc.; for in the form or prayer of the Sacrament, there is no distinction made between venial and mortal sins: "may God forgive thee whatever sins thou hast committed"; neither does the Council of Trent, nor the text from St. James' Epistle limit the effect of Extreme Unction to slight offenses.

We should note here a difference between Extreme Unction and the other Sacraments of the Living: all Sacraments of the Living forgive mortal sin when the recipient is in the state of mortal sin, provided he be not aware of it and have at least an imperfect contrition; but Extreme Unction will forgive mortal sin, even if one is conscious of it, provided, while attrite, he has not the opportunity to confess. Its effects go still further: the patient may be deprived of his senses, he may not know that the Sacrament is being administered to him, but if at any time, before becoming unconscious, he had the desire to receive it, the Sacrament would justify him, provided he had never retracted his intention to receive it. It is also probable that Extreme Unction will effect the justification of the recipient even if he never had the desire of it, but would have desired it, if he had known its necessity; for an interpretative intention is sufficient reason for the priest to administer it, and for the sick person who is unable to confess, that intention is probably sufficient for the remission of his sins. Although we cannot affirm as certain that Extreme Unction will thus remit the mortal sins of those who are unconscious and unable to confess even by a sign, since the Church has not so declared, we may state, as absolutely certain, that many are saved through Extreme Unction who otherwise would be lost.

3. The third effect of Extreme Unction is to comfort the sick or to raise them up, as St. James has it. The Council of Trent (Sess. 14 on the Sacrament of

Extreme Unction, Chap. 2) says: "The unction . . . . raises up and strengthens the soul of the sick person, by exciting in him a great confidence in the Divine Mercy, by the support of which the patient bears more easily the inconveniences and pains of his sickness . . . . and at times obtains bodily health, when it is conducive to the welfare of the soul."

The effect of Extreme Unction on the body and its ailments is direct or indirect: it is indirect, when the soul, frightened at the approach of death and the judgment to come and at the recollection of its innumerable sins, is enlightened by a lively faith in Christ's teachings and strengthened in its trust in God's mercy. Truth and hope produce in the soul resignation to the will of God, and a great peace of mind, which cannot fail to alleviate the bodily pains and thus comfort the mind as well as the body. This effect is sure to follow, if the patient is well disposed.

The effect is direct, if God in His mercy, or in view of the good dispositions of the patient, aids the medicaments and the tender care of the nurses to produce natural effects leading to the patient's recovery. This latter effect is not infallibly produced, for, from the words of the Council of Trent we conclude that Extreme Unction does not always restore the sick to health, but only when it is conducive to their spiritual welfare, or, as the catechism has it, when God sees fit. St. Thomas (Suppl., q. 30, a. 2) gives the reason of it. "Extreme Unction," he says, "does not procure the bodily cure through the natural properties of the matter (holy oils), but through divine power, which operates rationally. And since reason when operating never produces a secondary effect, except in so far as it furthers the principal effect, therefore bodily cure does not always result from the Sacrament, but only when it tends to promote the spiritual cure, and then it always produces the cure, if there be no impediment on the part of the recipient. The principal effect of the Sacrament is supernatural, for it remits the remains of sin and actual sins, if the recipient is properly disposed. If the restoration to health should be prejudicial to the patient's spiritual welfare, the Sacrament will not effect his cure. God alone can foresee whether a patient being cured will or will not lead a more virtuous life than heretofore or will or will not finally lose his soul or at least die later a less holy death."

We may affirm that Extreme Unction always brings bodily relief to the patient when he is well disposed, and when such relief will be conducive to his spiritual welfare; but the Church

herself does not teach that even in that case it always and infallibly restores the sick to health, although St. Thomas clearly teaches it in the above citation. The Council of Trent only says that at times it obtains bodily health, and neither condemns nor approves the pious belief of those who think that Extreme Unction never fails to give health to the body, provided the recipient place no obstacle to its effect, and provided the cure be not detrimental to the soul's spiritual welfare.

One of the obstacles to a speedy recovery would certainly be the patient's reluctance to receive the Sacrament and his desire to delay its reception until death is imminent.

275. What do you mean by the remains of sin?

By the remains of sin I mean the inclination to evil and the weakness of the will which are the result of our sins and which remain after our sins have been forgiven.

By the remains of sin we do not mean venial or mortal sin, but the consequences of them and especially those of mortal sin after the sin itself has been forgiven. Repeated sins of the same species finally create the habit or vice of that particular sin; and even the commission of one mortal sin influences the soul and creates a greater disposition to fall again into the same species of sin, and to a less degree into all kinds of sin. The reason of this tendency is that after every mortal sin the power of resisting temptations is weakened, and the passions, i. e., the intellectual appetites and the sensual appetites or the concupiscence of the flesh, become more turbulent and more aggressive. The passion of anger may become a man's dominant passion through frequent quarrels, enmities, revenge, etc., so that he can scarcely control himself at the least contradiction; or he may have frequently indulged in excesses of intemperance in drinking, so that only with great difficulty is he able to resist the craving for strong drink. The passion of anger and the craving for drink remain even after the sins of anger and drunkenness have been forgiven, and they are examples of what we call the remains of sin. Extreme Unction may not totally eradicate them, but

will weaken them, and by adding strength to the will, it will enable one to resist them effectively. What has been said of anger and intemperance is applicable to all other vices.

To the remains of sin belongs also a torpor of the mind and of the heart, which prevents the habitual sinner from elevating his thoughts and desires to the supernatural; it causes likewise a certain sluggishness, which cannot be shaken off without the special grace of the Sacrament; it causes sadness and fear which lead to cowardly diffidence in oneself and to a mistrust in God's promises.

To the remains of sin also belongs the punishment due to sin, a part or the whole of which will be remitted by Extreme Unction, according to the greater or less fervor with which the Sacrament is received.

Let us note here that the Church empowers every priest to grant to all sick people in danger of death a plenary indulgence, effective at the moment when the soul is leaving the body.

276. How should we receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?

We should receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction in the state of grace and with a lively faith and resignation to the will of God.

This answer of the catechism supposes that the recipient of Extreme Unction is conscious and desires to receive it.

1. If the sick person in danger of death be in the state of mortal sin, confession must precede the Extreme Unction; for Extreme Unction is a Sacrament of the Living. If the patient is not able to speak, he must show by sign or nod that he desires to confess his sins and that he is sorry for at least all his mortal sins, and whilst the priest is giving him absolution, he should renew in his heart a sincere contrition for all the sins of his whole life. The moment is also propitious for

the sick in danger of death to make an act of perfect contrition, for at the moment of death we should leave nothing undone to assure our entrance into heaven.

If the patient is morally certain that he is in the state of grace, there is no need of confession before receiving Extreme Unction, although it is advisable, unless he has already confessed on the same day before receiving the Viaticum.

2. The recipient of Extreme Unction should form in his heart a sincere and explicit desire to receive the Sacrament and all the graces attached to it; but this is not required for the validity of the Sacrament, for it is sufficient that he have an implicit desire to receive it, as is the case of one who submits willingly to the anointing by the priest without knowing in what Extreme Unction consists, or without thinking of its effects.

3. To receive plentifully the graces and fruits of the Sacrament, the recipient should make fervent acts of the three theological virtues, i. e., of faith in God, in Our Lord Jesus Christ and in His holy doctrine, a faith similar to the faith of those who presented themselves to the Saviour, expecting a cure from Him; of fervent trust in God's mercy and of hope in a glorious resurrection and in a blessed awakening after death; of an ardent love of God with a desire to see Him face to face, offering all the suffering and the agony itself as a sacrifice in union with the sacred agony of Christ, and as a sacrifice of adoration, of thanksgiving, of satisfaction for sin, and of impetration or prayer in order to obtain God's help against the temptations of the evil one at the moment on which eternity depends; finally the patient should offer to God fervent acts of entire resignation to His holy will.

A salutary practice also is to follow in spirit the priest when he anoints the different parts of the body, by making an act of contrition for all the sins committed through each of the five senses.

What sin is it to neglect Extreme Unction? Extreme Unction is not a Sacrament necessary to salvation, nor is there any strict precept to receive it, for St. James only advises us to bring in the priests of the Church; and therefore it would not, strictly speaking, be a mortal sin to neglect to do so. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 65, a. 4). This must, however, be understood of a person dangerously sick, who is morally certain that he is in the state of grace, and who has received the Holy Viaticum, and, who, besides, is convinced that the graces of the Sacrament are not required to resist the temptations of the devil effectually. Indeed the Council of Trent (Ibid. Chap. 3) warns the faithful against contempt of so great a Sacrament, which would involve heinous sin, and an injury to the Holy Ghost Himself.

277. Who is the minister of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?

The priest is the minister of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 14, Chap. 3—On the Minister of this Sacrament) says: "And now as to prescribing who ought to administer this Sacrament, this also was not obscurely delivered in the words above cited (viz., "If anyone is sick among you, let him bring in the priests of the Church"), for it is there also shown, that the proper ministers of this Sacrament are the presbyters of the Church, by which name are to be understood in that place not the elders by age, nor the foremost in dignity amongst the people, but either bishops or priests rightly ordained by the imposition of the hands of the priesthood" (1 Tim. iv. 14). The parenthesis in the citation from St. James' Epistle is added for the sake of clearness. The fourth canon of the Council on Extreme Unction repeats the same doctrine by anathematizing those that hold a contrary doctrine.

Although any priest may validly administer Extreme Unction, it is especially the duty and privilege of those in charge of souls, i. e., of the bishop, parish priests and their assistants. Therefore relatives or those that have sick people under their charge, should notify the parish priest or his assistants in their respective

parishes, as soon as the patients are in serious danger. It is much preferable that they should give notice to priests rather too soon than too late. This admonition is of practical utility to avoid the necessity of calling for a priest during the night. Whenever the doctor or nurse or some person of good judgment considers the danger serious, the priest should be summoned. He is in duty bound to respond as soon as practicable, no matter what may be the inconvenience or danger to himself; but parishioners should not abuse the right they have to demand the attendance of the priest at the bedside of the patient in a serious illness: the priest has also the right to expect that the parties concerned bear in mind his convenience and hence call him before death becomes imminent.

We may remark here that non-Catholic physicians, who have no knowledge of the effects of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, usually underestimate the gravity of their patient's illness. Hence, if on being questioned about his or her condition, they admit that there is some danger, but say they believe the patient will recover, the priest in charge of the parish should be notified forthwith.

ON HOLY ORDERS

INTRODUCTION

The five Sacraments already explained regard man as an individual, for they tend to the sanctification of men taken separately and not collectively. But man is by nature a social being, and as such he is confronted with a new order of things, with new duties and responsibilities. Consequently, new helps and graces are required; and this is true whether we consider man as a member of civil society or of the Christian society, established by Christ, i. e., the Church.

Man, according to St. Thomas (P. III, q. 65, a. 1. c), is fitted with respect to the whole community in two ways: by the one he receives the power to govern the people in a civil society, or to exercise public acts in the Christian community, the Church; this power to rule and to exercise public functions in the Church comes through the Sacrament of Holy Orders; and the second way regards the propagation of natural and spiritual life, and this belongs to the Sacrament of Matrimony.

There is order required in the supernatural as well as in the natural dispensations of God. If in the natural order children are subject to parental authority, and soldiers to their commanders and to their king, etc., so likewise in matters purely spiritual, there must be order; and who says order, says authority to rule and to act for others who are subject to authority. Our common sense will easily perceive that all the Sacraments depend on Holy Orders, for without it some of the Sacraments could not exist, whilst others would be stripped of their religious rites and solemn ceremonies, and consequently of the exterior respect which should accompany their administration. (R. C.)

In the Old Law there existed a true priesthood. To the descendants of Aaron alone did God entrust the sacrifices of the public worship; and all others were forbidden under pain of death to offer sacrifices, either in the tabernacle before the Ark of the Covenant, or later in the temple of Jerusalem.

We have learned that the sacrifices of the Old Law were but figures of the sacrifices of the Law of Grace, and can we suppose that God, Who was so zealous regarding the worship promulgated through Moses, should be less zealous regarding the reality, the Sacrifice of the Mass, of which the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law were but the types or figures? Is it fitting that God should have left His worship undetermined and should not have surrounded it with becoming reverence and solemnity to impress all people with the glory due to His majesty?

It behooves us now to examine carefully to whom and in what manner the Son of God communicated the power of governing the Christian community and of supervising its public worship with all that pertains to the sanctification of each individual member.

278. What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

Holy Orders is a Sacrament by which bishops, priests and other ministers of the Church are ordained and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 23, ch. 2), after declaring it proper that the priesthood should have ministers of diverse grades, teaches that Holy Scripture mentions priests and deacons, and that from the beginning of the Church the following other orders have been in use: those of sub-deacon, acolyte, exorcist, lector and door-keeper. This makes altogether seven or-

ders, and in chapter 3, the council teaches that Order is truly and properly one of the seven Sacraments of the Church; and in the third canon it anathematizes those that deny that Orders or Ordination is not truly and properly a Sacrament instituted by Christ.

The holy Synod settled once and for all that Order, Ordination or Holy Orders is a Sacrament instituted by Christ Our Lord. What does that mean? Let us first grasp the meaning of the words. Ordination refers to the rite by which bishops, priests and other ministers of the Church receive the power and grace to perform the duties of their office. Order refers to a special office, e. g., as when we speak of the office of bishop, the office of the priesthood, the office of the deaconship, etc.; but the word is often employed to express all the Holy Orders in general, and if it is taken in that sense, Order and Holy Orders are synonymous. The Council names only seven Orders, leaving out tonsure which most probably is not an Order, but simply a ceremony of initiation for those who enter into the service of the Church. It leaves out also the Order of bishop, thus allowing us to admit or deny that the Order of bishop is different from that of the priesthood. But the sacred Synod teaches (Sess 23, ch. 4) that bishops have succeeded to the place of the Apostles, that they are placed by the Holy Ghost to rule the Church of God, that they are superior to priests, administer the Sacrament of Confirmation, ordain the ministers of the Church, etc. The same doctrine is again proclaimed in canons 6 and 7. Still nowhere does the Council decide authoritatively that the Order of bishop is a different Order from that of the priesthood.

Neither has the Church wished to decide which of the Orders taken singly and separately are true Sacraments. The priesthood and the diaconate are undoubtedly Sacraments; and, according to many, even the subdiaconate and the episcopal Order are to be considered as distinct Sacraments. From this we should not conclude that there are more than seven Sacraments, for all the Holy Orders are to be considered as one, and every distinct Order, in so far as it is a Sacrament, was instituted for one and the same end, the Holy Eucharist. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 40, to c.) All the ministrations of those that are ordained regard the ministry of the altar, or in other words regard the Holy Eucharist considered as a Sacrifice or as a Sacrament, and the seven Sacraments have for ultimate end our union with Christ, completed and perfected in Holy Communion; but the presence of Our Lord is effected through the consecration of the Mass, and the Mass is the Sacrifice of the New Law.

From the bishop, who is a priest and ordains priests, to the very door-keeper of the sacred edifice in which the august Sacrifice is offered, all the Orders and their offices regard either the worship of God or the sanctification of souls. Hence all the Orders form as it were but one, the priestly Order. All the others but contribute to its dignity and service, and are but steps by which the priestly power and dignity may be reached. Consequently in the explanation of "what is the Sacrament of Holy Orders," we will consider it in the priesthood, although the definition of the catechism applies to all the Holy Orders in general.

Is the Ordination to the priesthood a Sacrament? We have learned from the teaching of the Council of Trent, that it is a Sacrament. Then, if such, what are its matter and form? The matter is none other than the imposition of the bishop's hands, and this we know from St. Paul, who also mentions the grace given by the imposition of hands, which is another requisite for a Sacrament. In his letter to Timothy (2 Tim. i. 6) we read: "For which cause I admonish thee, that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands," and again (1 Tim. iv. 14), speaking of Timothy's ordination he says: "Neglect not the grace that is in thee by prophecy with imposition of the hands of the priesthood." The words "by prophecy" mean: for which I have received a special prophetic revelation from God. Likewise, the Apostle leaves Titus in Crete to ordain priests for every city; "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee." (Tit. i. 5).

The form of the Sacrament consists in the prayers of the bishop that accompany the imposition of hands; for the bishop prays that God may shower the plenitude of His graces on the candidate to the priesthood, in order that he may be able to fulfill his sacred duties. Separately again the bishop confers two priestly powers, one by which he gives the priest the power of forgiving

sin, and by the other the power of consecrating bread and wine and of offering the Sacrifice of the New Law; for having anointed the priest's hands with sacred oil, he presents to him a paten with bread and a chalice of wine, saying: "Receive power to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate Mass as well for the living as for the dead." Then, imposing his hands on the candidate, the bishop says: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

As we have the two requisites for a Sacrament, viz., the outward sign and grace conferred thereby, we conclude that the third requisite necessarily follows, viz., divine institution; for God alone can attach grace to outward signs. Besides we have a direct proof that ordination is of divine institution in Acts xiii. 1-3, where we read: "Now there were in the Church which was at Antioch, prophets and doctors, and as they were ministering to the Lord, and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: segregate Me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them: then they, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away."

Now if we inquire why in this Sacrament there is no physical matter used, like water in Baptism, holy chrism in Confirmation, or holy oils in Extreme Unction, St. Thomas explains it by saying that in this Sacrament of Ordination the bishop confers a power which is in him, and which he is authorized to confer on others. This he does by means of an outward sign, the imposition of his hands, which effectively signifies it; and, therefore, the power and grace is not attached to the outward sign only, but likewise depends on the power which the bishop has received at his consecration. (St. Thos. Supp., q. 34, a. 5). An unbaptized person may validly baptize, a bishop's confirming would be valid if he himself had never been validly confirmed, a priest can give Extreme Unction and forgive sins even if he himself had never had need of these Sacraments, etc., but in Holy Orders the bishop confers the same power he himself has received in his ordination, possessing, by his consecration, the power to give it to others. If he lacked either Ordination or Consecration, he could not ordain priests or consecrate other bishops.

When did Christ institute the priestly Order? When at the Last Supper, after changing bread and wine into His body and blood, He said to His Apostles: "Do this for a commemoration of Me." This commission included the power to forgive sins, which had already been promised, and which was solemnly instituted and promulgated after His resurrection; for He necessarily intended then to make them the dispensers of all His mysteries, i. e., of the Sacraments, without which Ordination would fail in it purpose, viz., the sanctification of the faithful. The Sacrifice of the Cross, renewed in the Mass, and the union with Christ in Holy Communion can be effective and salutary only through the other Sacraments. He who gives the principal and greatest gift, must will to bestow what is indispensable for its reception: the Holy Eucharist is the richest gift of God, but by far the largest number of Catholics would be deprived of it without the power of the keys given to the priesthood.

Remark. In Scripture we find that the faithful in general are sometimes called "priests," because, when they are in the state of grace, they are living members of the High Priest, Christ Jesus. They offer spiritual sacrifices in their heart to God through faith inflamed by charity, and in that sense St. John says, "Christ has washed us from our sins in His blood, and has made us a kingdom and priests to God and His Father." (Apoc. i. 5, 6). In the same sense St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 5) and St. Paul (Rom. xii. 1) spoke; but in these passages there is question of an internal priesthood; whilst the priesthood which we have been considering, is an external priesthood, and consists in the right to offer the public Sacrifice of the New Law, which implies the power of the keys in the tribunal of Penance and authority to administer the other Sacraments. It is of this external priesthood that St. Paul speaks when He says: "Let a man so account us as the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God." (1 Cor. iv. 1).

Tradition in both the eastern and western churches prove beyond any doubt that from Apostolic times to our day the teaching of the Church concerning a living and external priesthood, has always been the same. We consider it superfluous to appeal again to the decisions of many councils and to all those testimonies which we have already cited from the Fathers of the Greek and Latin rites, when speaking of the Holy Euchar-

ist as a Sacrament and as a Sacrifice, of the Sacrament of Penance, and finally of the liturgies of antiquity, the monuments of past ages. Eusebius speaks emphatically to the point when he compares the priesthood of the Christians with that of the Old Law, and proclaims the greater excellence of the former; and St. Augustine resumes, as it were, the whole tradition when, treating of Baptism and Orders, he refutes those that pretend that Baptism cannot be lost, but that the right to give it can be lost, and concludes by saying: "If both of these are Sacraments, of which no one doubts, why is the former not lost when the latter is lost? No injury should be done to either."

We may also invoke the argument of prescription. When Luther called Order "an invention of the papistical synagogue," and when Calvin, although acknowledging the usefulness of a ceremony of Ordination, denied that it is a Sacrament, priestly Ordinations as well as the other Ordinations were in use in both the eastern and western churches, and both churches ascribe to the priestly Ordination the power and right to celebrate the Divine mysteries, to forgive sins and to dispense the other Sacraments instituted by Christ. The Lutherans in 1575 sent delegates from their Augsburg Confession to Jeremiah, the then Patriarch of Constantinople, to ascertain the belief of the Greek schismatic church on this point and on other doctrines; and the answer was that the Greek, like the Latin Church, held that there are seven Sacraments and among them the Sacrament of Orders. The liturgies of the Greek Church already mentioned are like heralds proclaiming the same doctrine which the Catholic Church has always held and taught. It is needless to insist further on the point, for the argument was sufficiently developed, when we treated the subject of the Holy Eucharist.

We now come to the question as to which of the seven Orders mentioned by the Council of Trent are Sacraments, and which Orders were instituted by the Church only.

The Church has practically divided Orders into two kinds: the Minor and Major Orders. The Minor Orders are four, and to each one of them were formerly given special functions: viz., acolytes had the function of lighting the candles and of serving either the priest at low Mass or the subdeacon in solemn Mass by handing him the water and wine used in the Holy Sacrifice. The Greek name means companion: he is so named, because he accompanies the sacred minister with lighted candles in his hands. This function is now usually discharged by small boys.

Exorcists had for their peculiar office to recite the prayers over those possessed by the devil in order to deliver them from the obsession. Cases of people possessed are now rare, but in the beginning of the Church, before the spread of Chris-

tianity, real demoniacal possessions were common, as we learn from both pagan and Christian authors. The office of exorcist is now reserved to priests, and they must not attempt to exorcise without the bishop's permission.

Lectors had for duty to read the Holy Scriptures in Church.

The door-keepers' duty was to keep profane intruders from the church. They also had a general custody of the sacred edifice.

All the Minor Orders are at least of great antiquity, if they were not intsituted by Christ Himself. As the Council of Trent has not determined the question, and moreover, since Minor Orders have nowadays but little practical bearing except as steps toward the higher Orders, we need not examine the question any further. St. Thomas (Suppl. q. 35, a. 5) teaches that Minor Orders are not required for the valid administration of the superior or Major orders. The Greeks place subdeaconship among the Minor Orders, but the Council of Trent places it among the Sacred or Major Orders; and in the Latin rite the subdeacon, who reads the Epistle and serves the deacon at solemn Mass, is bound by the vow of celibacy and is also obliged to recite the holy office. As to the sacramental character of this Order, it is placed with the Minor Orders.

Tonsure, which is only an ecclesiastical ceremony, had probably its origin in religious communities, whose members adopted it as a mark of penitential life, either to represent the crown of thorns or to signify their contempt of the world. The tonsure is worn by all the clerics in Catholic countries, and since it precedes Minor Orders, it is worn by all those who have received any of the Orders of the Church. In the ceremony, the bishop cuts a little hair from the top of the head, and thenceforth the candidate is a cleric and enjoys by right the immunities of the clergy.

The diaconate is recognized among the Anglicans and also among the Episcopalians and Methodists of the United States. To the proper functions of deaconship belongs the right to baptize and to preach with the permission of the bishop. Presbyterians and Baptists attribute to their deacons only the care of temporalities.

In the Catholic Church the Order of Deaconship is a sacred Order and a Sacrament. The Council of Trent (Sess. 23, Can. 6) teaches as follows: "If anyone says that in the Catholic Church there is not a hierarchy by divine ordination instituted, consisting of bishops, priests and ministers, let him be anathema."

The Holy Synod does not name deacons, but they are the most eminent in dignity among all the ministers and they belong undoubtedly to the hierarchy of the Church.

The occasion of the institution of the Order of deacons was the murmuring of the Greek Christians on account of the neglect of the widows among the Greek Jews, who had become Christians, especially in the distribution of alms (Acts vi. 1). Their function was sacred, for the Apostles, to allay the dissatisfaction, ordered seven men to be chosen for the work of serving at tables, requiring that they should be of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom (Ibid. 3), and after the seven had been chosen, they, "praying, imposed hands upon them." (Ibid. 6).

Among the seven original deacons was St. Stephen, who performed great wonders and signs among the people. Those that disputed with him "were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit that spoke." (Ibid. 10). His remarkable discourse and martyrdom are related in Chapter 7 of the Acts.

Philip, another one of the seven, went to Samaria and there preached the Gospel, and those that believed were baptized. (Acts viii. 5, 6, 12). Tradition also attributes to the deacon a sacred ministry.

It is not a matter of faith that the Order of deacons is a Sacrament, but it is the common doctrine of all Catholic theologians, because when a bishop ordains a deacon, he imposes hands upon him and says: "Receive the Holy Ghost for strength and to resist the devil and his temptations in the name of the Lord," and the Council of Trent declares that these words are not said in vain, i. e., that they confer the Holy Ghost on the recipient.

The episcopate. The episcopate, considered in its inherent excellence and aside from its jurisdiction, is by divine institution the highest grade of dignity and eminence in the Catholic Church. Calvin, following in the foosteps of the Waldenses, Albigenses and Wickliffites, denied that the bishops are in anything superior to priests, and tried to explain that the episcopate was established to avoid dissension among the many priests of a large city. The Presbyterians and Baptists hold that bishops and elders (elder meaning the same as priest in the etymological sense of the word, presbyter or ancient), are equal in dignity, and that they are not distinct from each other in this office.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 23, Chap. 4) declares that, besides the other ecclesiastical degrees, bishops who have succeded to the place of the Apostles, principally belong to this hierarchical order, that they are placed, as the Apostle says, by the Holy Ghost to rule the Church of God (Acts xxii. 28), that they are superior to priests, administer the Sacrament of Confirmation, ordain the ministers of the Church, and can perform many other things, over which functions others of

an inferior Order have no power." Canon VI. reads as follows: "If any one says that bishops are not superior to priests, or that they have not the power of confirming and ordaining, or that the power they possess is common to them and to priests, let him be anathema."

All Catholics must admit that in the episcopate is to be found the plenitude and perfection of the priesthood; but is the Ordination or Consecration of a bishop a separate and distinct Sacrament? It has the three requisites of a Sacrament: viz., outward sign, or imposition of hands of the consecrating bishop; the form is the words: "Receive the Holy Ghost," and the Council of Trent, as we have seen, teaches that these words are not said in vain; therefore, the outward sign produces its effect, viz., the grace of the Holy Ghost. The institution by Christ necessarily follows. The Apostles, whose successors the bishops are, received their power of Ordination when He said: "Do this for a commemoration of Me." The argument that all the power granted to a bishop has for end the Holy Eucharist, that the bishop has no greater power with respect to the Blessed Sacrament than a simple priest, and hence that his Consecration is not a distinct Sacrament, does not appeal to many as very convincing. That all Ordinations tend directly or indirectly towards the Blessed Sacrament may be conceded, the lectorate or the power of reading the Holy Scripture in church contributes only very indirectly to the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Order is nevertheless generally considered to be a Sacrament. Undoubtedly the Consecration of a bishop tends more directly to the Holy Eucharist than any of the Minor Orders, for from the bishop is derived the power to consecrate. The ordaining of priests can hardly be called a mere hierarchical power or one of jurisdiction only.

That the episcopate is a distinct Order from that of the priesthood and a Sacrament in itself, is commonly held as certain by almost all Catholic theologians.

What are the effects of the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

These three: sanctifying grace, sacramental grace and the character it imprints in the soul.

Every single Ordination to a distinct Order, considered as a state, is a Sacrament if Christ instituted it, and consequently it gives grace. All the Orders that are Sacraments are Sacraments of the Living, and therefore give the "second" or habitual grace, i. e., an increase of sanctifying grace. There are, including the episcopate, according to general opinion, eight Orders, and, therefore, at each Ordination to those Orders, the candidate receives an increase of habitual grace, with a greater

infusion into the soul of the theological virtues, the moral and intellectual virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

2. Orders, likewise, bestow sacramental grace, i. e., a special aptitude and habit with a right to such actual graces as will enable the recipient of the Sacrament to comply with the duties attached to each Order.

3. The Sacrament of Holy Orders imprints an indelible character in the soul, and although Holy Church has never given any authoritative decision on the subject, we may well believe that each distinct Sacrament imprints on the soul a different mark or character, as the functions and duties of each Order are different; much in the same way as in an army of any country, corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, captains, majors, colonels, and generals are distinguished from the common soldiers and from each other by the insignia of their grade.

From the foregoing consideration we conclude that no Ordination to the same Order can be given validly a second time, and that he who is validly ordained cannot be deprived of his Order, even though he can be suspended from the exercise thereof; nor can he lose by his own free will, by heresy or apostasy for example, the character imprinted on his soul.

279. What is necessary to receive Holy Orders worthily?

To receive Holy Orders worthily it is necessary to be in the state of grace, to have the necessary knowledge and a divine call to this sacred office.

1. The state of grace is required, for Holy Orders is a Sacrament of the Living. Should the recipient of any Order be in the state of mortal sin, but not conscious of it, the Sacrament would forgive the mortal sin; because the recipient, being in good faith, puts no obstacle to the effects of the Sacrament. If one, with full knowledge of having committed a mortal sin, receive the Sacrament in that state, he commits a sacrilege; he receives the character of the Order, he is truly ordained, but he receives no grace. If afterwards he repents and is reconciled to God by Penance, the grace of the Sacrament revives.

2. To have the necessary knowledge, i. e., the knowledge sufficient properly to comply with the duties and obligations attached to each Order. More knowl-

edge is required for the Major than for the Minor Orders. Nowadays Minor Orders are ordinarily given to those only who aspire to the priesthood, except in some religious orders or institutes. Canon law requires that one should not advance to a higher grade without having first exercised the ministry of a lower order, but this is not now required in the case of Minor Orders, for, owing to the present necessities of the Church, especially in missionary countries, the bishop can dispense with the rule even for the Major Orders.

3. A divine call or vocation is also required for "neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was." (Heb. v. 4).

Although this passage regards the priesthood, in which resides the dignity of offering up sacrifices and gifts, it may be applied to all sacred Orders and especially to the Major Orders, for they are as steps ascending from a lower to the highest dignity. Besides, although there is no precept that the candidate for Minor Orders shall have the intention to ascend to higher Orders, the Council of Trent speaking of the requisites for Minor Orders, says: "And whereas from these Orders there is the entrance unto higher Orders and to the most sacred mysteries, no one shall be admitted thereto, whom the promise of knowledge does not point out as worthy of the greater Orders." (Sess. 23, ch. 11, on Reform). The meaning of this passage seems to be that bishops could not admit to Minor Orders those whom they foresee to be unworthy of the higher or Major Orders.

A vocation to enter into any of the principal states that tend towards our eternal destiny must come from God. They are the clerical state, the religious state and the laity, which last comprises the single state and the married state. For all these a certain vocation is required, but a clearer and surer vocation is necessary for the clerical state, on account of its pre-eminence and holiness, the sanctity required in its ministers, and the gravity of the obligations attached to it. How can anyone find out whether he is called to the clerical state? There are three principal signs of a true vocation: (a) a singular inclination or attraction towards the clerical state in general, or towards the priesthood in particular. When that inclination is constant and strong and is not weakened in temptations; and when one finds an anticipated pleasure and enjoyment in the hope of attaining the eagerly desired holy state, such attraction and sweetness can only come from God. (b) A virtuous and

moral life is also a sign of a divine call, if it is accompanied with a certain attraction for the ministry, or if one loves to assist at the sacred functions of the Church. The Council of Trent (Sess. 23, ch. 12, on Reform), after stating the age at which one can be ordained to deaconship and priesthood, viz., not before his twenty-second year for the former and his twenty-third for the latter, adds: "nevertheless, bishops are to know that not all who have attained to that age must needs be admitted to the aforesaid Orders, but those only who are worthy, and whose commendable life is an old age." And in the next chapter the sacred Synod teaches that candidates for the priesthood must be so conspicuous for piety and chasteness of morals, so that a shining example of good works and a lesson how to live may be expected from them."

Likewise the Apostles fully understood the importance of a vocation, for, when about to choose a successor to Judas, they prayed: "Thou, O Lord, Who knowest the hearts of all men, do Thou show which one of these two Thou hast chosen." (Acts. i. 24). Christ himself tells His Apostles: "you have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." (John xv. 16). (c) A right and pious intention is also a sign of vocation; but what intention is considered proper and holy? The intention to become more agreeable to God, to work the better for the honor and glory of God, to extend God's kingdom on earth, to devote one's life to the salvation of others and to secure one's own salvation, to attain a higher degree of perfection and sanctity, etc.

On the contrary, when one has only in view an easier or more honorable life, or finds pleasure in outward marks of respect attached to the coveted Orders, loves worldly enjoyments and worldly goods, lacks piety and devotion, rarely approaches the Sacraments although he has the opportunity, it is a sign that he has no vocation or has lost it through his own fault.

Still no one should depend upon his own judgment in a matter of such importance, for it is indeed very difficult to save oneself from eternal perdition after entering the priesthood without a vocation; as it is likewise difficult to save oneself, if, notwithstanding the conviction of his vocation, he opposes or rejects it. Therefore, every young man who has the necessary moral and physical endowments, and the other attainments required for the priesthood, should consult his confessor or some pious and learned ecclesiastic, whom he has chosen as director of his conscience. He should also frequently ask for divine light to know his vocation and to follow its lead; and finally, with the help of his director or confessor, he should seriously consider the obligations of the clerical state and whether his past life and present dispositions are a sufficient guarantee that he will be able to comply with them.

280. How should Christians look upon the priests of the Church?

Christians should look upon the priests of the Church as the messengers of God and the dispensers of His mysteries.

The words of the catechism in this answer are those of St. Paul (1 Cor. iv. 1): "Let every man esteem us as the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God." A dispenser, from the Greek "economist," is an overseer and manager of all the goods of his master. In the same sense St. Paul speaks when in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians he extols the glorious ministry of the New Testament, more exalted than the ministry of Moses. (2 Cor. iii. 7).

The dignity of the priesthood rests on the twofold power conferred on it by Our Lord: viz., the power over the true and real body of Our Saviour and the power of forgiving sins, i. e., the power over the mystical body of Christ, or over the members of the Church of God.

1. Our Lord in the Last Supper gave His Apostles and their successors the priests full power over His sacred body. How exalted the dignity of the priests whom Christ Himself obeys! The priest pronounces the words of consecration and His words open the heavens and make the Son of God descend upon the altar. He carries His Lord withersoever he chooses; he incloses Him in the tabernacle, he gives Him in Holy Communion to all, to the poor and even to the leper; he carries Him to the sick, aye, into the poorest hovel.

He makes a Victim of Him in the Mass, and, as it were, constrains Him to pray for those that hate Him, and to offer His death again and again to His eternal Father for those that continually offend Him; and, O miracle of obedience, even an unworthy priest forces the Saviour to pay the debt due to the sins of the most wicked among men. He makes the God-Man offer up a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving for the ungrateful in their stead, and to give due worship to His eternal Father for those that blaspheme His holy name. Adam was great before his fall, when all the animals obeyed him. Moses was great when he rolled back the sea and ordered the waters to stand motionless like two huge walls, to afford a passage to the Israelites. Great was Josue, when he made the sun stand still in the heavens; there have been mighty conquerors who ruled over many people and nations. But the priest is greater and mightier

than all they, for he has command over God Himself in God's greatest work, that of the redemption of men.

2. The priest is the messenger and ambassador of God, as well as the dispenser of God's mysterious gifts for the eternal welfare of man. To the messenger or ambassador belongs the right to announce to the subjects the will of their sovereign, and so to the priest belongs the dignity and duty to make known the will of the King of kings. The priest exercises this power in his instructions and in his sermons: "All power is given Me in heaven and on earth," said Our Lord to the priesthood, "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you. going, therefore, teach ye all nations." "He that heareth you heareth Me; he that despiseth you despiseth Me." These are the words of the Sovereign Master; could He have extolled more clearly the dignity of the priesthood? Consider for a moment the wonderful mysteries of God's goodness and mercy. The priest is the dispenser of them all. The priest pours the waters of Baptism on the children of wrath, he expels the evil one and calls the Holy Ghost to abide in their soul; he confers upon them the rights of children of God, and restores to them the inheritance of heaven. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" murmured the Jewish Scribes, when Our Saviour had said to the man sick of the palsy: "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." (Mark ii. 5-7). Well, Christ has delegated that power to His priests, and when a priest is available, none is forgiven unless the priest absolves him. Someone in order to exemplify the priest's power has imagined two confessionals in a church, one occupied by Christ Himself and the other by a priest, and he explained that the power of the priest would be equal to that of Christ; but we may add that the power of the priest is in some respects greater, for Christ would say to the penitent who is well disposed: "Be of good cheer, My son, show thyself to the priest and he will forgive thee thy sins. I have delegated all My power to My priests; therefore, have recourse to them."

We need not wonder, if a priest can by the words, "I absolve thee," change the greatest criminal from a slave of Satan into a well-beloved child of God, that St. Francis of Assisi, who out of humility refused the priesthood, said: "If I should meet an angel and a priest, I would bend my knee first to the priest and afterwards to the angel." Ecclesiasticus teaches us to honor God, but also to give honor to the priests (Eccli. vii. 33), and Our Lord Himself said to His priests: "He that heareth you heareth Me and he that despiseth you despiseth

Me." (Luke x. 16). St. Paul, writing to Titus, repeats the same warning: "Let no one despise thee." (Tit. ii. 15). Those that honor and respect the priests of God, not only honor God by it, but draw upon themselves special blessings from heaven. (Cat. of Perseverance).

281. Who can confer the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

Bishops can confer the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

The ordinary minister of all the Holy Orders is the bishop and the bishop alone. This is evident from the teaching of Council of Florence in its decree for Armenians; and the Council of Trent (Sess 23, Can. 7) anathematizes him who says: "that bishops . . . have not the power of confirming and ordaining or that the power which they possess is common to them and to priests."

Nevertheless, the Holy Father may authorize simple priests to ordain the candidates for tonsure, for Minor Orders and for subdeaconship, according to common opinion and probably even for deaconship; but this power does not belong to the priesthood.

We have remarked already that Holy Orders validly conferred cannot be lost; hence an heretical or schismatic or excommunicated bishop can validly confer all Orders; and, therefore, those so ordained are not ordained over again, upon being reconciled to or entering the Church. Hence, all those ordained in the Greek rite and other schismatic churches are truly ordained, and the same may be said of those who have been ordained by the Jansenistic bishops of Holland, such as the so-called Old Catholic priests of Germany and Switzerland. The first Jansenistic bishop was consecrated by a suspended bishop of Babylon.

As to the bishops of the Anglican, Episcopal and Methodist churches, their ordination was declared invalid by Pope Leo XIII in 1869, not only because the so-called bishops of those churches have lost their episcopal character from the time of Elizabeth, but also on account of the insufficiency of the matter and form used in ordination, and finally on account of the want of proper intention in the ministers recipients of their ordinations.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

282. What is the Sacrament of Matrimony?

The Sacrament of Matrimony is the Sacrament which unites a Christian man and woman in lawful marriage.

This answer teaches us that for Christians there can be no lawful marriage unless it is also a Sacrament; and the reason will be clear to all when we have explained that Christ has raised the Christian marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament.

The etymology of the word "matrimony" is not clear. (St. Thos. Suppl. q. 44, a. 2). It is composed of two words, of which one is "mater" or "matris" (mother or mother's), and the second is disputed. Some give the latter word a Greek derivation from "monos" (single); others, a Latin derivation from "munus" (duty or office). In the former case, matrimony would mean what is expressed by the word "monogamy," i. e., a marriage to one wife only; and in the latter case, the word would express the office of a mother, viz., to conceive, to bring forth, to nurse and educate her offspring. St. Augustine, without referring to the second part of the etymology of the word "matrimony," says that "matrimony is so called, because in marriage a woman intends principally to become a mother."

It is also called marriage from the French "mari," husband, because in the conjugal union, man becomes husband to a woman; it is called "wedlock" from the union and usual obligations between husband and wife; it is called "nuptials" from the ancient ceremony of marriage, in which the bride veiled her face through modesty, "nubere, nupta" (to veil, veiled), hence also the word "connubial"; and finally the word "conjugal" is applied to the union of husband and wife, from "jugum," (a yoke) and "con" (together), because husband and wife are bound together by a common yoke. (R. C.)

Marriage may be considered as a natural union between man and woman established by God for the propagation of the human race. "God created man to His own image; male and female He created them. And God blessed them saying: increase and multiply and fill the earth." (Gen. i. 27, 28). When God had formed Eve from Adam's rib, He brought her to him, "and Adam said: this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was

taken out of man. Wherefore man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be two in one flesh." (Gen. ii. 23, 24).

From this account we clearly see that marriage was from the beginning a union between one man and one woman, for they could not otherwise be "two in one flesh." Likewise, marriage was indissoluble except by death, for man must cleave to his wife. This fact is also clearly proved from the miraculous formation of Eve from Adam's rib, and from the fact that the union is to be such that they may be said "two in one flesh."

Hence Matrimony, as established from the beginning, is a conjugal and legitimate union of man and woman, which is to last during life.

2. Matrimony or marriage may be also considered as a Sacrament, and as such, it is the same natural marriage entered into by mutual consent, and elevated to the dignity of a Sacrament. Hence we define Matrimony as follows: Matrimony is a Sacrament, by which a Christian man and woman enter into a legitimate and conjugal union which lasts during life and which gives to the married people the grace to love one another and to bring up their children for the greater honor and glory of God.

The mutual consent to enter upon a conjugal or marital life is a contract, and is the essence of the Sacrament. That contract or consent may be expressed in words or by sign, e. g., by a nod or a hand-grasping.

The consent of both parties to the contract must be external, sincere and deliberate: deliberate, i. e., with advertence to its essential obligations; external or expressed by words or sign, between definite persons who are capable of contracting marriage; i. e., no law exists forbidding the contract under pain of nullity.

Matrimony can be contracted validly by proxy, and even licitly, if there are grave reasons for such a method. The reason is that an actual intention to contract marriage is sufficient, provided it has not been retracted. The following conditions are required: 1st, that the proxy have received the mandate to contract with a definite person; 2nd, that the proxy contract the marriage himself and not by substitute, unless substitution be allowed in the procuration; 3rd, that the principals have not meanwhile retracted; 4th, that all the other requisites for the validity of the Sacrament be observed, e. g., that the proxy con-

tract before the parish priest, or his delegate, of either of the contracting parties, before two witnesses.

We shall now first of all prove that for Christians Matrimony is a Sacrament, and then consider the matter and form constituting the outward sign of the Sacrament.

Luther admitted that marriage is lawful, but refused to concede to it the nature and dignity of a Sacrament. As for Calvin, he wrote: "The last is matrimony, and all acknowledge that it was instituted by God, but no one until the time of Gregory held it as a Sacrament." All the so-called reformers follow in the same strain.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 24, Can. 1.) has the following: "If anyone says that Matrimony is not truly and properly one of the seven Sacraments of the Evangelical Law, or was not instituted by Christ the Lord; but that it has been invented by men in the Church, and that it does not confer grace; let him be anathema."

The doctrine of the Church, so clearly proclaimed by the holy Synod, that Matrimony is a Sacrament rests upon the teachings of the Gospel, the decrees of the Councils, and the tradition of the universal Church. (Ibid. Doctrine on Matrimony). This doctrine is supported by the teachings of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians (v. 22, sq.) The Apostle first tells wives to be subject to their husbands and tells husbands to love their wives, because Christ is the Head of the Church and the Church is subject to Christ, Who has purified and sanctified her. Christ's love for His Church, and her submission to Him, are, as it were, the norm or model, which must govern the mutual relation between husband and wife. Then the Apostle continuing says: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great Sacrament but I speak in Christ and in the Church." (Ibid, 31, 32).

The word in the Greek text for "Sacrament" is "mystery"; it may designate something mysterious or hidden, and may be translated by "Sacrament"; for all the Sacraments of the New Law are called "mysteries" by the Greek Fathers.

To what does the word "this" refer? Evidently to what immediately precedes it: viz., "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh." Thus the bond or union between man and wife is a great mystery (Sacrament), not so much in itself, as originally instituted by God, but because it signifies and typifies the holy union of Christ and His Church. Now, the union of Christ and His Church is accomplished by redemption and by the laver of regeneration in Baptism; and this sacred union becomes the norm and model of the relations between husband

and wife, who undoubtedly need grace to conform themselves to their model, and that grace is surely conferred by Matrimony. Hence Matrimony is a Sacrament.

St. Chrysostom evidently adopted St. Paul's explanation of the Sacrament, when he writes: "Nuptials are a Sacrament and a figure of the love of Christ which He showed towards His Church." St. Clement of Alexandria calls Matrimony sacred and divine. "Among us," says St. Augustine, "in nuptials the Sacrament is of more value than the fecundity of the womb."

Tertullian and St. Ambrose teach the same doctrine in other words.

Let us add for a last proof that Matrimony or Marriage is a Sacrament, the consent of the Greek and all other oriental churches, who have at different times separated from the Catholic Church. Their rituals used in the administration of the Sacraments are sufficient evidence of their belief, and the answer of Jeremiah, the Patriarch of Constantinople, to the Protestant divines of Wurtenberg, which we have quoted several times already, should have convinced the Lutherans and Calvinists, if they had been open to conviction.

If Matrimony is a Sacrament there should be a visible sign of invisible grace; but where shall we find the matter and form of this Sacrament? We have said already that among baptized Christians the valid contract of marriage constitutes this Sacrament. Hence it is a common doctrine taught by Catholic theologians that the contracting parties themselves are the ministers of the Sacrament. Let us see what this means. At a marriage the future husband, in words or by signs, says to the woman: "I take thee for my wife," and the latter answers: "I take thee for my husband"; both husband and wife know the meaning of these words or of similar words or signs by which they signify their intention to enter into a conjugal union. By the contract the husband delivers his person to the wife and the wife her person to the husband. It indicates surrender and acceptance on the part of both. The persons of the husband and wife are then the remote matter of the contract and Sacrament; because they are the subject of a contract: the actual delivery and acceptance are the matter and form of the Sacrament.

It is of little consequence whether the matter and form of Matrimony are distinct and separate; it is sufficient that there be an outward sign of inward grace.

That this Sacrament signifies and confers grace, we learn from these words of the Council of Trent: "The grace, which perfects that natural love and confirms that indissoluble union, Christ Himself, the Author and Finisher of the Sacraments, has merited for us by His passion." We are then taught, that husband and wife, united in the bonds of mutual love, are enabled, by the grace of this Sacrament to repose in each other's affections; to reject every criminal attachment; to repel every inclination to unlawful intercourse; and in everything to preserve "marriage honorable and the bed undefiled." (Heb. xiii. 4).

If the contract is the essence of the Sacrament, and the contracting parties are its ministers, why are marriages invalid when they are not contracted in the presence of the pastor of either of the Catholic parties to the contract, or in the presence of his delegate? The priest is required not as the minister of the Sacrament, but as the principal witness of the contract of marriage. Two witnesses are required for the validity of the contract and a third and principal witness, the priest, is also indispensable for the validity of the Sacrament and of the conjugal contract. We conclude from this doctrine that the contracting parties of the marriage are themselves the ministers of the Sacrament.

Let us note: 1st, That the parish priest or his delegate who solemnizes the marriage is a witness of the Church in order that he may see to it that the marriage be contracted according to the laws of God and of His Church, and that nothing be done that is opposed to the dignity of this Sacrament to which are attached the graces which Christ merited by His passion and death; and also in order to warn the contracting parties that the Sacrament must be received with a pure and holy intention, and with trust in God's promises.

2nd, That the contracting parties, if they are in the state of mortal sin, commit a sacrilege not only by unworthily receiving a Sacrament of the Living, but also by becoming the unworthy ministers of the Sacrament.

283. Can a Christian man and woman be united in lawful marriage in any other way than by the Sacrament of Matrimony?

A Christian man and woman cannot be united in lawful marriage in any other way than by the Sacrament

of Matrimony; because Christ raised marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament.

Before explaining this answer, we think it necessary to state what is required on the part of the subjects to receive this Sacrament validly. For the validity of the Sacrament there are three requisites:

1. A valid Baptism is required, for without Baptism no other Sacrament can be received. Infidels, i. e., unbaptized persons can contract a valid marriage, but cannot receive the Sacrament or its graces; while heretics and schismatics, who have been validly baptized, are capable of receiving it; but the validity of their marriage, like that of Catholics, depends on the natural, divine and ecclesiastical laws. If the marriage is valid, they necessarily also receive the Sacrament, although for want of proper dispositions, they may not receive the graces attached to it.

2. The proper intention. From what we have said, when treating of the Sacraments in general, it follows that a virtual intention is required to contract marriage validly; but the explicit intention of receiving the Sacrament is not required. The intention of making a valid contract of marriage includes the desire of the Sacrament. If however two baptized persons should be willing to contract marriage, but either of them inwardly protests that he or she is not willing to receive the Sacrament, the contract of marriage would be null and void, as in that case the protesting party intends to do something impossible.

3. The third requisite for the validity of the Sacrament of Matrimony is that the contracting parties be both free from all impediments that invalidate the contract. Impediments are of two kinds: (a) prohibitory and (b) invalidating or nullifying impediments, called also diriment impediments. The first make marriage illicit, but not invalid; and the second make the contract as well as the Sacrament null and void. These latter impediments may have their source in the natural, divine or ecclesiastical laws. (Cf. No. 284 Impediments).

We can now answer the question proposed by the Catechism: whether two baptized persons can contract a valid marriage without receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony. The answer given by the Catechism will be easily understood from the doctrine already explained, that Christ raised the nuptial contract or natural marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament. The Sacrament is not a quality added to the contract, as grace adds a new quality to the soul; it is the essence of the contract, and hence there is neither a valid marriage nor a conjugal union, nor any rights accruing from it, nor any duties attached to it, if it is not a Sacrament. Hence also the conjugal life between a Christian man and woman, who have not received the Sacrament, is but a shameful concubinage, although they may have contracted a civil marriage.

The ultra-liberals have been at work for a century past and have joined the rationalists, atheists, materialists, Jews and even heretics in a common effort to enforce upon the governments of the world the framing of laws to disrupt the identity of a valid contract and the Sacramental nature of the contract, by setting up a distinction between a legitimate marriage and a Christian marriage, as if a Christian marriage were nothing else but the Church's blessing of a civil and legitimate contract.

Christians, no matter under what government they may live, must understand that when their marriage is valid, it is also necessarily a Sacrament. The State cannot upset by any law the dispositions of Christ. Christian marriage will forever remain the figure or representation of the spiritual union of Christ with the Church, His Spouse. The doctrine herein laid down is clearly stated in several Apostolic Letters of Pope Pius IX, in his Syllabus and in an Encyclical of Leo XIII. Let us moreover remark that Catholics who contract a merely civil marriage are more guilty before God than those living in concubinage, for they rely upon the esteem of their fellow-men, while availing themselves of the laws of the land to legalize their shameful union. They think perhaps that their state is similar to that of two baptized or two unbaptized Protestants; but the case is entirely different. A baptized man and woman, if non-Catholics, unless some invalidating impediment makes the contract void, do contract validly and receive the Sacrament of Matrimony, if they marry according to the laws of the land; and if two unbaptized persons enter into a conjugal union, their

marriage is valid and legitimate, and is recognized as a natural and lawful marriage by God and His Church. Catholics, on the contrary, who contract a civil marriage, sin mortally, because it is an attempt to receive unworthily a Sacrament instituted by Christ; and their marriage is before God null and void. Such monstrous iniquity should be condemned by Catholics and fair-minded Protestants alike, and those guilty of it should be shunned like lepers in a Christian community.

What must be said of a marriage between a Catholic and an unbaptized person, when such a marriage can be performed validly, e. g., when for a very grave reason the Holy Father or any bishop whom he has delegated thereto, has granted the proper dispensation? Will the Catholic party receive the Sacrament? This is a question which the Church has never decided; but we may rely on God's loving kindness that a Catholic man or woman, who is so unfortunate as to be forced to apply for a dispensation to marry an unbaptized person, will not be entirely deprived of the graces of the Sacrament; and, therefore, it is more than probable, although not certain, that the Catholic party will receive the Sacrament, provided the marriage contract be otherwise valid. The very fact that the Church does sometimes grant to a Catholic the necessary dispensation, militates in favor of that opinion; for how could the Church grant a dispensation for a marriage in which a Catholic would be deprived of the graces so necessary to comply with the heavy burden which the conjugal state imposes upon married people?

284. Can the bond of Matrimony be dissolved by any human power?

The bond of Matrimony cannot be dissolved by any human power.

A consummated marriage is indissoluble except by the death of one of the contracting parties to the marriage: such is the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

In modern times the Greeks have admitted adultery as a legitimate cause for a divorce; and many countries have framed laws legalizing divorces for various causes. Anglicans seem divided on the subject, as is proved by the proceedings in the attempted divorce of Queen Caroline from George IV. Almost all other Protestants admit adultery and wilful desertion of either spouse as sufficient grounds for absolute divorce. Throughout the United States, adultery, and in many States of the Union, other causes are sufficient to dissolve the bond of Matrimony.

That marriage is indissoluble except by the death of one of the contracting parties is a doctrine of the Cath-

olic Church, clearly laid down by the Council of Trent (Sess. 24, Can. 5): "If anyone says, that on account of heresy, or troublesome cohabitation, or the designed absence (wilful desertion) of one of the parties, the bond of Matrimony may be dissolved, let him be anathema."

The doctrine of the Church is and has always been that adultery is not a cause for the dissolution of a conjugal union, and further, that, after a separation for cause of adultery, even the innocent party cannot contract another marriage whilst his or her consort still lives, and hence that if either party enter into a matrimonial union, he or she commits adultery.

The teachings of the Church may not convince an infidel; but what must we think of a Christian, who avowedly claims membership in any Christian denomination, and rejects the doctrine of Christ? If adultery or any other cause can be considered as a legitimate reason to dissolve the bond of Matrimony, how is it that Our Lord Himself, when interrogated by the Pharisees on the subject of divorce, answered: "What God hath joined let no man put asunder"; and that, explaining afterwards to His disciples what He had said about Moses' bill of divorce He said: "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband and be married to another, she commiteth adultery." (Mark x. 9, 11, 12). St. Paul preaches the same doctrine as his Master, when he writes to the Corinthians (1 Cor. vii. 39): "A woman is bound by the law, as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty; let her marry whom she will, only in the Lord." And again: "To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth that the wife depart not from her husband; and if she depart, that she remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband." (1 Cor. vii. 10). Thus to her who is separated from her husband, even for a just cause, the alternative left by the Apostle is that she remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. The Church, unless influenced by very weighty causes, does not sanction even the separation of husband and wife. (R. C.)

But suppose that a husband has sent away his wife on account of the sin of fornication, what then? Let us hear Our Lord again: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, excepting for the cause of fornication, maketh her to commit adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery." ((Mat. v. 32). Our Lord here teaches plainly that if any man sends away his wife, except for the cause of fornication,

he is guilty before God of all the sins of adultery his wife may commit, but if her unfaithfulness be the cause of her dismissal, then he is not to be blamed; nevertheless, whoever marries her commits adultery. The bond of marriage cannot have been dissolved, if the man who marries her is an adulterer. Why, says St. Augustine, is the man who marries a dismissed woman an adulterer? For no other reason than that she is still the wife of him who dismissed her. Since the matrimonial rights of the husband and wife are equal, it is also plain that the wife who leaves or sends away her husband, causes him to commit adultery; but if his unfaithfulness was the cause of the separation, then the guilt falls upon the dismissed person, and the wife is free from blame.

How did the early Fathers of the Church view the indissolubility of a valid marriage? Christ has clearly framed a law: "Thou shalt not dismiss thy wife," says Clement of Alexandria, "except on account of fornication. But he considers it adultery if either be joined in marriage whilst one of the separated parties is alive." St. Jerome explains the above-quoted text of the Apostle St. Paul, and lays particular stress upon the doctrine of the Apostle that "a woman is an adulteress if she marries another man, even if her former partner be an adulterer, sodomite or guilty of the worst crime."

There are several texts from St. Augustine's writings which prove the doctrine of the Church, and he sums up the whole question by saying: "No married woman can subsequently become the wife of any other man unless the first have ceased to be her husband; and she ceases to be the wife of the first husband, if he died, but not if he commit fornication. Therefore, a wife can lawfully be dismissed for the cause of fornication, but the bond existing between her and the prior husband remains, and for that reason he is guilty of adultery, who marries the woman who is divorced, even for the cause of fornication."

To these citations, which prove that the discipline of the Church has always been the same from the Apostles' time to our days, we might add the testimony of several Councils; we cite the Ecumenical Council of Florence, in 1439 under Eugene IV, because besides the Cardinals and the occidental bishops, there were many Greek bishops present and among them, the Greek patriarch of Constantinople and of Jerusalem, and the Patriarch of Alexandria and Antioch were represented by their delegates. We read in the decree for Armenians, passed by the Council and approved by the Holy Father: "Although for the cause of fornication, it is lawful to make a separation from bed and board, nevertheless it is not lawful to contract another marriage, for the bond of a legitimately contracted marriage is

perpetual." How can a Christian indeed judge otherwise, when he reflects that the Christian marriage represents in the social life the everlasting union of Christ with His Church?

Besides, the beneficial consequences of the indissolubility of matrimony are many; and they not only offset the supposed reasons against an indissolubile union, but greatly overbalance them. It is claimed that it is hard and unjust that the innocent party of a conjugal union should be obliged to live with an adulterous spouse, or, if the guilty part be dismissed, to live a life of continence and chastity. Likewise, the votaries of free-love enumerate the evils that spring from an indissoluble marriage, such as constant quarrels, threats upon each other's life, disgrace, even murder. But who does not see that these evils are not the consequence of an indissoluble union, but can be ascribed only to the evil dispositions or bad habits of either spouse, if not of both husband and wife? Have those evils diminished since our courts of justice have shown so much laxity in granting divorces? An unsuspected authority gives a clue to the answer, and he is one of the foremost expounders of civil law. "It is very questionable whether the facility with which divorces can be procured in some of the States be not productive of more evil than good. It is doubtful whether even divorces for adultery do not lead to much fraud and corruption. I have had occasion to believe, in the exercise of the judicial cognizance over numerous cases of divorce, that the sin of adultery was sometimes committed on the part of the husband for the purpose of the divorce." (Kent's Comm.)

IMPEDIMENTS OF MARRIAGE—AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

The authority of the Church extends to all matters of faith and morals, and in particular to all the means of salvation left to her by her Founder Among these means of salvation the Sacraments instituted by Christ hold the first place. Matrimony among Christians is a Sacrament, as we have seen; and as such it belongs exclusively to the Church to make laws concerning the validity and licitness of a marriage contract, because in the contract lies the essence of the Sacrament, or rather the valid contract is the Sacrament of Matrimony itself. The Catholic Church has always claimed sole jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to Christian Marriage.

Civil power has the right to legislate regarding the management of the property of the husband and wife, and can determine by just and equitable laws the rights of succession; but no civil law can dispense fathers and mothers from educating their children in the Christian religion. The Church has

no authority over those who have never been members of Christ's mystical body, and therefore she has never attempted to legislate for those whom Baptism has not subjected to her jurisdiction; but if one of the contracting parties to a marriage is a baptized Christian, the laws of the Church bind his or her conscience. The Church has the right to determine by laws and decrees what conjugal union between a Catholic and infidel, heretic or schismatic, as well as between two Catholics, may be validly or licitly contracted and upon what condition, and to declare all other marriage contracts invalid or simply illicit. (Co. of Trent, Sess. 24—On Marriage). The Church has inherited Christ's power, and she teaches His doctrine in matters relating to conjugal unions; for her mission is to lead all men to their eternal destiny; and who will deny that Christian marriage and the laws of the Church relating to it are a powerful aid toward the accomplishment of her sacred mission? Furthermore, the Church is the interpreter of the natural and divine law as revealed by God, and since a Christian marriage may depend on the validity of a previous marriage contracted by two unbaptized persons, it belongs to her and to her alone to judge of the validity of the marriage contracted under the natural law. It would be not only her right but her duty to decide on the validity or nullity of the former marriage, if one of the contracting parties wishes to be baptized and to marry a Catholic, and if doubt arises regarding the validity of the former marriage.

True, the Church is not infallible in her decisions based on facts, but all sincere Catholics must abide by her decisions until incontestable proofs have been produced in favor of one or the other contestant.

Since it is the desire of the Holy Father, expressed in the Canon Law published under his authority, that parish priests should prudently explain to the faithful under their charge the impediments of Matrimony (Can. 1018) we now take from the same Canon Law the most important decrees relating to the prerequisites, licitness and validity of Matrimony.

Betrothal or Promise of Marriage

A formal promise of marriage need not necessarily precede its final celebration; but propriety, consonant with established principles, rules and customs, seems to demand that young men and women, who have made their choice of a partner in the connubial state, should apprise their friends and relatives of their decision. Even before the final decision, they are supposed to have obtained the consent of their respective parents, to have consulted the wisest among their friends and relatives, and to have asked the advice of their confessor and pastor,

precautions which augur a happy union. When we see that clerics arrive only step by step at the priesthood, and that religious pass at least one year in a novitiate before making their first vows, does it not seem preposterous that Christians should enter into the matrimonial state without any ceremony whatever, particularly so, if we consider that their temporal welfare here, and their eternal happiness hereafter, largely depends on the choice they make of their partner for life?

The Church, to say the least, favors solemn betrothals, and she recognizes them as valid and binding only if they take place as she prescribes.

Betrothals

The promise of marriage, whether unilateral or bilateral, is null and void unless it be made in writing, signed by the contracting parties and attested by the signature of the parish priest or Ordinary of the place, and by at least two witnesses. If one or both of the contracting parties cannot write, that fact must be stated in the document and the signature of a third witness must be added, who with the bishop or parish priest and two witnesses undersign the contract. No particular form is prescribed. We now give an example of a written contract of betrothal, drawn up as if the contracting parties could not write:

We, the undersigned, hereby mutually agree and mutually bind ourselves to enter into the bonds of Matrimony on or before three months from date. Signed this (date) at (place, town, city and state) and delivered to (name of the holder of the contract).

his		her
John (X) Sullivan		Mary (X) Townsend
mark		mark

Witnesses to signatures of the above contracting parties:

Rev. James Little, parish priest of (place, county and state).

Louis Laurel	of	"	"	"	"
Henry Bluff	of	"	"	"	"
May Perdew	of	"	"	"	"

Note: All promisors unable to write should make the cross or should at least touch the top of the penholder whilst the cross is being made by one of the witnesses.

Note 2: Conditional betrothals should as a rule be avoided: but if there is any condition, it should be clearly stated, and then the betrothals become valid upon the verification of the condition.

Note 3: Betrothals bind the consciences of the parties, but give no right to force compliance with the promise in

ecclesiastical courts. Nevertheless, the injured party may sue for damages resulting from non-compliance with the promise.

Before a marriage may be celebrated it must be apparent that nothing is contrary to its licitness and validity. When there is danger of death, and no proof of the freedom of the contracting parties from any and all the impediments is available, it is sufficient, unless there is evidence to the contrary, that the contracting parties make a sworn affidavit that they have been baptized and that they are not prevented by any impediment from contracting marriage.

The parish priest who, by right, assists at the marriage, should, at the opportune time, investigate with diligence whether there is anything to hinder its celebration. He should question separately and with caution the groom as well as the bride, whether there is anything against the marriage to be contracted, whether they, and the woman especially give their consent freely, and whether they are sufficiently instructed in the Christian religion, unless on account of the quality of the persons the last inquiry be needless. It belongs to the Ordinary of the place to prescribe specific rules for this inquiry to be made by the parish priest. (Can. 1020).

The parish priest, unless Baptism was conferred within his own territory, should demand from both parties a certificate of their Baptism, or at least from the Catholic party alone, if there is question of a marriage to be contracted with the dispensation of the impediment of disparity of worship.

Catholics who have not been confirmed should receive that Sacrament before they are admitted to contract marriage, if they can do so without great inconvenience. (Can. 1021).

The parish priest must announce publicly between whom the marriage is to be contracted (1022). The banns of Matrimony must be proclaimed by the parish priest of the contracting parties at the solemn or principal Mass on three consecutive Sundays or feasts of obligation, or during other devotions usually attended by a large concourse of people. The Ordinary may substitute for the proclamation of the banns notices posted on the doors of the church for at least eight days, which should include no less than two Sundays or feasts of obligation. Nevertheless, marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics, except in particular cases left to the judgment of the Ordinary, should not be proclaimed in Church.

All the faithful are bound to reveal to the parish priest or the Ordinary any impediment to the lawful or valid celebration of a marriage they know or hear of or that may come to their knowledge. Canon Law prescribes what the parish priest should do when a doubtful impediment is revealed to him.

In case the marriage is not contracted within six months

after the last proclamation of the banns, they must be proclaimed anew, unless the Ordinary decides differently.

It is the duty of parents, as well as that of the priest, to dissuade minors from marrying in spite of the opposition of their parents and guardians, or without their consent or knowledge; and if the youthful contractors persist, the parish priest is not allowed to witness the ceremony unless the Ordinary has been first consulted. Besides civil governments generally prohibit such marriages, and the laws of many states and kingdoms hold them as null and void, and in that case Canon Law also forbids them.

Diriment and Prohibitory Impediments

There are two kinds of impediments, diriment and prohibitory impediments. The first invalidates the marriage contracted with such an impediment, and it matters not whether the contracting parties are aware of the impediment or not. The second or prohibitory impediment makes the marriage illicit, but does not invalidate it.

Canon Law also differentiates between major and minor impediments, irrespective of whether they are diriment or prohibitory only.

The minor impediments are: consanguinity in the third degree of a collateral line; affinity in the second degree of a collateral line; public honesty in the second degree; spiritual relationship; the impediment arising from adultery with the promise or even with the attempt of marriage before a civil magistrate only. All other impediments belong to the major impediments.

Prohibitory Impediments

1. The prohibitory impediments are: the simple vow of virginity or of perfect chastity, the vow not to marry, the vow to enter a religious order, and the vow to receive Holy Orders. No simple vow invalidates marriage, unless the invalidity has been decreed by a special rescript of the Holy See with regard to particular persons.

2. If by the civil law of any country or state legal relationship arising from adoption makes marriage illicit, the marriage is also illicit by Canon Law.

3. The Church severely prohibits everywhere marriages between baptized Christians of whom one is a Catholic and the other belongs to a heretical or schismatic sect; and if there be danger of perversion either to the Catholic party or to the offspring, such marriages are prohibited by the Divine Law as well. Not only bishops and priests, but also Catholic parents or guardians and the friends of those who contemplate

marriage, should leave no stone unturned in order to deter Catholics from mixed marriages, and Catholic parents who consent to the marriage of their sons or daughters with those who have notoriously abandoned the Catholic Faith, or who have joined societies condemned by the Church, deserve the reproof of all sincere members of the true Church. (Cf. Can. 1064 to 1066).

The Church does not dispense from the impediment of mixed religion, that is, in marriages between two baptized persons of whom one is a Catholic and the other not, unless:

1. Grave and just causes make them urgent;
2. Unless the non-Catholic spouse guarantees to remove all danger of perversion to the Catholic spouse, and unless both parties guarantee to baptize and educate their offspring in the Catholic Religion.
3. Unless there be a moral certainty that the guarantees will be complied with.

Canon Law further adds that the parties should as a rule be required to give the above guarantees in writing.

Also the Catholic spouse is in duty bound to endeavor prudently to procure the conversion of his or her non-Catholic mate.

Canon Law further teaches that although the dispensation from the impediment of mixed religion has been obtained, the married parties may not, either before or after the Catholic celebration of the marriage, have recourse also, either by themselves or by a delegate, to a non-Catholic minister, as the accredited representative of a religious cult, in order mutually to give their matrimonial consent or to renew it. Furthermore, if the parish priest knows for certain that the parties to a marriage contract will violate this law, or have violated it already, he is not permitted to assist at the marriage, unless for very grave cause and unless the Ordinary has been consulted.

On Diriment or Invalidating Impediments

1. Young men under sixteen years of age and young women under fourteen cannot contract a valid marriage; and although they can marry validly after completing the above age, young men and women should be earnestly advised to observe the general custom with regard to the proper age of marriage. Let us remark that in the United States people in general look upon marriages of young men of less than twenty-one and of young women of less than eighteen, as premature.

2. Antecedent and perpetual impotence, either on the part of the man or on the part of the woman, which makes either of them physically unfit for conjugal union and marital inter-

course, invalidates the marriage, but sterility neither nullifies nor forbids it.

3. Catholics should be warned against contracting a new marriage with another mate before the bonds of a previous marriage, that was consummated, are dissolved by ecclesiastical authority, and if they do, the new marriage is null and void, except in the case of the Pauline privilege; for, although there may be good reasons to believe that the Church will invalidate the former marriage, the contracting parties should await her decision.

4. A marriage of an unbaptized person with one who is baptized in the Catholic Church or with a Catholic who was converted from heresy or schism is null and void. Nevertheless if the unbaptized party was commonly reputed as baptized at the time the marriage took place, and doubt arises regarding the validity of the Baptism, the validity of the marriage must be upheld until it is proved that one of the contracting parties was baptized and the other was not.

Let us note here with Canon Law that what was said relative to the obligation of bishops, priests, parents and friends of the contracting parties to prevent mixed marriages as much as lies in their power, applies still more forcibly to marriages between Catholics and unbaptized persons.

5. Clerics in sacred Orders or religious with solemn vows cannot validly be married, and the same applies to simple vows which the Holy See has decreed as invalidating the marriage contract.

6. Marriage between a man who has abducted a woman with the intention of marrying her, is null and void as long as she remains in his power; but if she is separated from her abductor and remains in a safe place with her full consent, and if she consents to have him for her husband, the impediment no longer exists. The impediment holds also, and it is considered as equal to abduction, if with a view to marriage the woman be violently detained in the place where she resides or to which she freely went.

7. The following are incapable of contracting marriage validly:

(a) Those who although bound by the ties of a legitimate union promise each other to contract marriage, commit adultery together, and attempt to marry even before a civil magistrate.

(b) Those in the case when adultery was committed and the promise of marriage mutually given and one party has wilfully caused the death of his or her mate's spouse.

(c) Those who, without being guilty of the crime of adultery, physically or morally co-operate in causing the death of either's husband or wife.

8. (a) Marriage is invalid between blood-relations in a direct ascending or descending line.

(b) It is invalid in a collateral line up to the third degree inclusive; nevertheless the impediment is multiplied only as often as the common stock is multiplied (that is, as often as the parties of whom the relationship is sought have either a common father or mother, or both, within the third degree of a collateral line).

Scheme of Consanguinity

Common Father or Mother	A	Stock	B	Common Father or Mother
Brothers or Sisters	C	1st	D	Half-Brothers and Half-Sisters
First Cousins or Grandchildren	E	2nd	F	First Cousins or Grandchildren
Second Cousins or Great-Grandchildren	G	3rd	H	Second Cousins or Great-Grandchildren
Third Cousins	I	4th	J	Third Cousins
Fourth Cousins	K	5th	L	Fourth Cousins

Unequally related are: C and F; D and E, 2nd degree—C and H; D and G, 3rd degree, and so on.

In the above scheme there can be but one impediment of consanguinity, as we take it for granted that C, E, G. I. K are all direct descendants of either A or B or from both, and likewise, D, F, H, J and L, are direct descendants of either A or B.

If we suppose that C marries F his niece, then G and H, supposed children of that union, whether lawful or not, are doubly related, viz., in the first and third degrees in a collateral line, and I and J children of either G or H are related in the second and fourth degrees of a collateral line, and K and L children of either I or J are in the third and fifth degrees of a collateral line. Relationship would be farther multiplied if D and E respectively niece and uncle should also marry one another. Marriage is never permitted as long as there remains a doubt about the consanguinity of the contracting parties in a direct line or in the first degree of a collateral line.

9. Affinity results from valid matrimony, whether only ratified by ecclesiastical law or also consummated. It exists only between the husband and the blood-relations of the wife, and likewise between the wife and the blood-relations of the husband. Hence, the computation that the blood-relations of the husband are in the same line and degree related by affinity to the wife, and vice-versa.

Affinity invalidates matrimony in all degrees of a direct ascending or descending line, so that a husband even after the death of his wife cannot validly marry either the ancestors of the wife in a direct line or her descendants in a direct line. It also invalidates marriage in the collateral line, but only in the second degree inclusive, and by that is meant that the husband cannot marry his wife's blood-relatives in the first and second degrees. What we have said of the husband applies also to the wife with respect to her husband's relatives.

This impediment is multiplied:

(a) As often as the impediment of consanguinity is multiplied from which it proceeds.

(b) By successive marriages between the husband and blood-relations of his deceased wife, or between the wife and blood-relations of her deceased husband.

10. The impediment of public honesty arises from an invalid marriage, even if the contracting parties have never lived together as man and wife; and it arises also from public and notorious concubinage; in both cases it invalidates marriage in the first and second degrees in a direct line between the husband and the blood-relations of the wife, and vice-versa.

11. Spiritual relationship resulting from Baptism invalidates marriage between the baptized person on one side, and his or her baptizer and sponsor on the other.

12. Those who by civil law are disqualified from contracting marriage by reason of the legal relationship arising from adoption, cannot validly be married according to Canon Law.

On the Consent of the Parties to the Marriage Contract

Those marriages alone are valid which are contracted before the parish priest or the Ordinary of the place, or before a priest delegated by either of them, and at least two witnesses, except as hereafter set forth. Unless there are reasons militating against it, the marriage should be celebrated before the parish priest of the bride.

In danger of death to either party, marriage can be validly contracted before two witnesses, and also, barring danger of death, provided that grave obstacles, which will continue at least for a month, prevent the contracting parties from presenting themselves before their parish priest or Ordinary, or a priest delegated by either of them. Parish priests should, by all means in their power, persuade Catholics to procure for themselves at their marriage the solemn benediction given in the "Mass for husband and wife" and it may even be given long after the celebration of the marriage.

The right of giving the solemn blessing to married persons belongs to the priest, who, by right, could assist at the marriage.

Nevertheless, this solemn benediction must be omitted if either party is not Catholic. Matrimony may be contracted at all times of the year; but solemn marriages with the Church's solemn blessing are forbidden from the first Sunday of Advent until Christmas, inclusive, and from Ash-Wednesday until Easter, inclusive.

Matrimony between Catholics being a Sacrament should be celebrated in the parish church and not in private chapels or private houses, without the special permission of the Ordinary.

LESSON THE TWENTY-SEVENTH

ON THE SACRAMENTALS

The Sacraments contain and give grace of themselves through the institution of Christ, but now we enter upon the study of practices of the Church which of themselves do not contain grace, but which, if used with pious disposition, may obtain it. They are called sacramentals, because they are somewhat akin to the Sacraments. This lesson will show in what respects they differ from the Sacraments, and what benefits they procure for us.

285. What is a sacramental?

A sacramental is anything set apart or blessed by the Church to excite good thoughts and to increase devotion, and through these movements of the heart to confer grace and to remit venial sin.

The first effect of the sacramentals, according to the catechism, is that they excite in us pious movements of the heart, which may, but do not infallibly, give grace as the Sacraments do "ex opere operato," if the recipient place no obstacle to their effect. The Church cannot directly attach any grace to an outward practice or sign; God alone can do that. But the Church has instituted some exterior practices which increase the devotion in the heart, and this devotion towards God, His saints and His salutary institutions being meritorious, will obtain an increase of grace, if one is in the state of grace; and if one is not in the state of grace, it may lead to his conversion. The second effect

of the sacramentals is that they remit venial sin, either through the grace they bestow, or through the movements of the heart, when these, aided by a prevenient grace, excite in us sorrow for venial sins, which will obtain their forgiveness, or finally through the movements of the heart themselves when the first movements aided by actual grace engender in us reverence towards God and holy things, and incline us to worship and to love Him. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 87, a. 3).

There are other effects of the sacramentals: one is the remission of temporal punishments due to our sins, through meritorious actions accompanying a sacramental, such as long and fatiguing prayers, kneeling on the hard benches, etc., or through the indulgences that are attached to sacramentals. Likewise we may obtain even temporal benefits through the sacramentals, and particularly when these are offered in the form of prayers according to the usage of the Church, like holy water and various exorcisms against harmful storms, hurricanes, etc. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 71, a. 3).

Finally, we should note among the effects of the sacramentals, through the prayers instituted by the Church, the power they have to put the devil to flight. Therefore, although we should not attribute to the sacramentals an infallible remedy against all evil, a greater effect may be expected from them than from our own private prayers, as they are fortified by the prayers of the Church, the Spouse of Christ. More will be said on this subject, when we speak of the sign of the cross.

286. What is the difference between the Sacraments and the sacramentals?

The difference between the Sacraments and the sacramentals is: 1st, the Sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ and the sacramentals were instituted by the Church 2nd, the Sacraments give grace of themselves, when we place no obstacle in the way; the sacramentals excite in us pious dispositions, by means of which we may obtain grace.

The Sacraments and sacramentals differ principally in these tow particulars: that the Church and not Christ has instituted the sacramentals, and that the Sacraments, independently of the dispositions which are not essential to the particular Sacrament, always give grace;

whilst the graces, given through the sacramentals, depend entirely on the interior dispositions of the one who makes use of them, and are proportionate to the merits of such dispositions. Some might conclude from this fact that the sacramentals cannot be beneficial to the soul, but are rather a hindrance. That such a deduction is not warranted, is easily understood, if we consider that man is composed of body and soul, and that exterior acts excite and intensify the interior dispositions or emotions of the soul whether for good or evil. Thus, pious affections give vent to exterior devotion both private and public, and these in their turn increase individual piety.

287. Which is the chief sacramental used in the Church?

The chief sacramental used in the Church is the sign of the cross.

The sign of the cross has been in use in the Church from the apostolic times. Tertullian, who died in 245, makes mention of its use in the following words: "When we move away, whether we come in or go out, when we dress, put on our shoes, wash ourselves, when we enter our room, when we sit down, finally before whatsoever occupation, we sign our forehead with the cross." (De Corona, cap. 3). The Greek Fathers, St. Athanasius and St. Basil, mention the making of the sign of the cross as a common practice among Christians, and St. Jerome, a Latin Father, not obscurely intimates that Christ Himself is the Author of the practice, when he says: "This sign was left us by our Lord when He ascended into heaven." (R. C.) We may conclude from this that when our Lord blessed His Apostles at the moment of being taken up into heaven, He blessed them with the sign of the cross: "And it came to pass, whilst He blessed them, He departed from them, and was carried up to heaven." (Luke xxiv. 51).

288. How do we make the sign of the cross?

We make the sign of the cross by putting the right hand to the forehead, then on the breast, and then to the left and right shoulders, saying, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The catechism here speaks of the sign of the cross generally in use among the people. In the Mass, at both Gospels, the people follow the celebrant in making with the thumb three crosses, one on the forehead, one on the lips and one on the breast. Priests bless almost all things by drawing a cross over them and in doing it, they use different words in different ceremonies.

289. Why do we make the sign of the cross?

We make the sign of the cross to show that we are Christians and to profess our belief in the chief mysteries of our religion.

1. By making the sign of the cross, says the catechism, we show that we are Christians. From the times of the Apostles the sign of the cross was always considered as a sign by which Christians were distinguished from Jews and Gentiles, and this custom is still in use among new converts from heathenism, especially among the simple people: if they are asked whether they are Christians, they will generally answer by making the sign of the cross. St. Augustine speaks of the same custom in his time.

2. We make also the sign of the cross before beginning any occupation, e. g., in the morning when we rise, when we start on a journey, before and after meals, or whenever we begin any new task, in order to implore God's blessing on our undertakings, whether they be of little or great importance.

3. We should especially make the sign of the cross when we suffer or are in pain, or danger threatens us, or when we are tempted by the evil one or by our own

evil inclinations. The sign of the cross puts the devil to flight, and that danger removed, we overcome more easily with God's help all temptations to which the allurements of the world or our own passions expose us.

When we are asked whence comes the power of the sign of the cross, the answer will be promptly forthcoming, if we consider that Christ by His death on the cross has vanquished the devil and delivered us from his cruel slavery, and that God has determined that all Christians who have recourse to the cross will experience the blessings of Christ's victory over hell, and receive through the merits of the Saviour help to overcome the power and wiles of Satan.

4. We make also the sign of the cross to profess our belief in the chief mysteries of our religion: the profession of our faith is explained in the three following numbers.

Note. From the reasons above given for making the sign of the cross, we conclude that besides being the sign of the Christian, it is also a short but devout prayer by which we place ourselves under the protection of God and confidently supplicate Him, through the merits of Jesus Christ, for freedom from all harm whether of the body or of the soul, and for grace to conform ourselves in all things to His holy will.

290. How is the sign of the cross the profession of faith in the chief mysteries of our religion?

The sign of the cross is the profession of faith in the chief mysteries of our religion because it expresses the mysteries of the Unity and Trinity of God and of the incarnation and death of Our Lord.

291. How does the sign of the cross express the mystery of the Unity and Trinity of God?

The words, "In the name," express the Unity of God; the words that follow "of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," express the mystery of the Trinity.

We express the Unity and Trinity of God through

the words we use at the same time we make the sign of the cross with the hand. The words are: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." If we said: "In the names, etc.," in the plural, we should profess our belief in three Gods, which is heresy; but by saying: "In the name," in the singular, we profess that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are one and the same God, having one and the same divine nature; and likewise by mentioning the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, we profess that in God there are three divine Persons distinct from one another, but nevertheless equal in all things, as the three divine Persons are one and the same God. Thus the words express the Unity and Trinity of God, i. e., Unity of nature and Trinity of Persons.

292. How does the sign of the cross express the mystery of the incarnation and death of our Lord?

The sign of the cross expresses the mystery of the incarnation by reminding us that the Son of God, having become man, suffered death on the cross . . . .

The sign of the cross made with the hand, apart from the words, has a meaning in itself. When we put the right hand to the forehead and draw the hand downward, we express thereby that Christ, the Saviour, Who always was and always will be in heaven in the bosom of His Father, came down upon earth and became incarnate; and by moving our hand from the left to the right side, we profess that Jesus, the Incarnate God, delivered us by His death on the cross from the slavery of the devil and restored to us the grace to be called and to be in reality the children of God; for in Holy Scripture the left designates the place for the children of God's wrath and the right side, the place assigned to the children of benediction, the children of God.

293. What other sacramental is of frequent use?

Another sacramental of frequent use is holy water.

294. What is holy water?

Holy water is water blessed by the priest with solemn prayer to beg God's blessing on those who use it, and protection from the powers of darkness.

We should note here that it is more salutary to make the sign of the cross with holy water than without it; the reason is that holy water adds to the sign of the cross a new power through the prayers and blessings of the Church; for holy water, as the catechism says, is blessed by solemn prayer to beg God's blessing on all those who use it, and, in particular, protection from the powers of darkness or hell. Pius IX has granted fifty days indulgence to those who devoutly make the sign of the cross, and one hundred days, if the sign of the cross is made with holy water.

Remark. No Catholic house should be without holy water: it may be easily obtained from the parish church, in which the celebrant of High Mass on Sundays always blesses the water with which he sprinkles the people. Devout Catholics also procure for themselves a good share of the holy water blessed on Holy Saturday and on the eve of Pentecost.

295. Are there other sacramentals besides the sign of the cross and holy water?

Besides the sign of the cross and holy water there are many other sacramentals, such as blessed candles, ashes, palms, crucifixes, images of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints, rosaries, and scapulars.

All these sacramentals are in use in the Church to excite in us good thoughts and pious sentiments of the heart. The use of blessed candles has come down to us from the ceremonial of the Jews, who used such lights in the temple of Jerusalem, probably to express their faith in God and in the Redeemer to come; whilst Catholics thus confess their faith in Christ, Who is the Light of the World and the Victor over the powers of darkness. Ashes remind us of our mortal nature: "Remem-

ber, man, thou art dust and into dust thou shalt return," says the priest when he places the ashes on our heads on Ash Wednesday. Ashes are also the emblem of penance and sorrow of heart for the sins we have committed. Palms are emblematic of victory over sin and eternal death. Crucifixes remind us of the death of Christ Who by His cross saved us from sin and hell; and they also remind us that the life of a Christian is one of suffering; the sight of a crucifix should fill our hearts with hope in God's mercy. Therefore no house should be without the emblem of our salvation through the Saviour's death on the cross. Images of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints remind us of their holy lives which we should strive to imitate, and of their powerful intercession with God; rosaries said with devotion honor our Blessed Mother in a special manner, and wonderfully increase our confidence in her powerful mediation with her divine Son and scapulars of the Blessed Virgin are diminutive liveries or armor worn to honor her and to place the wearer under her protection. The confraternities of the Scapular have been enriched by many indulgences. The Holy Father Leo XIII granted the privilege of substituting a particular medal blessed for that purpose, for the regular scapulars, provided one has already been inscribed in one of the Confraternities of the Scapular. (Cfr. Appendix on indulgences).

LESSON THE TWENTY-EIGHT

ON PRAYER

296. Is there any other means of obtaining God's grace than the Sacraments?

There is another means of obtaining God's grace, and it is prayer.

The Sacraments and prayer were both intended by Christ as means of grace; but, as we have seen, the Sacraments contain and confer grace of themselves, pro-

vided the recipient place no obstacle to their effect. The Saviour has attached all the merits of His passion to those outward signs of grace, and therefore they infallibly give grace, if the recipient is capable of receiving them, and the minister has the power to administer them.

Prayer is also a means of grace; but prayer must be accompanied with the necessary disposition, explained hereafter, and not even then are we sure to obtain just what we desire, for God may substitute other blessings for those we ask. Sacraments, on the other hand, necessarily produce the effects for which they were instituted. The efficacy of prayer extends to all graces or spiritual benefits of the soul, and these should form the principal object of our most earnest desires and supplications; but even temporal favors may form the object of our prayer, unless they be detrimental to the spiritual welfare of the soul. There is one advantage that prayer has in matters spiritual over the Sacraments, and that is that that we can pray always and in every place, which cannot be done with the Sacraments. Prayer, but also good works, keeps alive in us the effects of the Sacraments and these, therefore, need not be resorted to as often as prayer.

We have learned the great efficacy of the Sacraments and we should also have a correct idea of the wonderful efficacy of prayer.

Prayer literally does violence to God: our Lord has Himself acknowledged that He cannot resist our supplications. This is clearly taught by the words He spoke to Moses: "Let Me alone, that My wrath may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them," meaning the people that adored the golden calf (Ex. xxxii. 10); but Moses supplicated the Lord for mercy, "and the Lord was appeased from doing the evil which He had spoken against the people." (Ib. 14). In Jeremiah (vii. 16) we read that The Lord, having threatened the people of Israel with the direst calamity, said: "Therefore, do not pray for this people . . . And do not withstand Me: for I will not hear thee." St. Jerome, commenting upon these two texts tells us that the efficacy of prayer is such that it resists the justice of God and forces Him to grant pardon.

Now, whence this efficacy? It rests upon Christ's promise:

these are His words: "Ask and you shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke xi. 29); and again: "Therefore I say unto you, all things whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that you shall receive; and they shall come unto you." (Mark xi. 24). "Amen, Amen, I say to you: if you ask My Father anything in My name, He will give it you." (John xvi. 23). These promises need no explanation: they are sufficiently convincing; but whence comes this liberality of our God? Because He is our Father and we are His children, and He is as loving as He is lovable. The Saviour clearly intimates His further desire to grant what we ask, when He says: "What man is there among you, of whom if his son shall ask bread, will he reach him a stone? Or if he shall ask him a fish, will he reach him a serpent? If you then being evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more will your Father Who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask Him?" (Mat. vii. 9-11). We should then conclude that if the Sacraments infallibly give grace when administered with legitimate authority and with the proper disposition of the minister and of the recipient, prayers are likewise all-powerful if they have the necessary qualities. A man of prayer will infallibly obtain all the graces necessary to salvation; even the grace of final perseverance will be granted to pious and persevering prayer.

297. What is prayer?

Prayer is the lifting up of our minds and hearts to God to adore Him, to thank Him for His benefits, to ask His forgiveness, and to beg of Him all the graces we need whether for soul or body.

The catechism speaks in this lesson of vocal prayer and not of mental prayer, for the definition applies to vocal prayer only, the prayer employed by all, learned and unlearned, and the prayer absolutely necessary to salvation for all adults.

Mental prayer, or meditation, consists in seriously reflecting on the truths of our holy religion in order to excite thereby pious affections of the heart and corresponding good resolutions for our future conduct. Meditation is very useful for all, and necessary for those who strive for perfection; and according to St. Alphonsus Liguori, it seems even necessary for perseverance in the grace of God. (Praxis Conf. No. 122—Cf. Jerem. xii. 11). Meditation is usually interspersed with vocal prayer; and this commingling of mental and vocal prayer gives new

life to the soul and determination to the will to avoid all occasions of sin, and to practice the virtues of our state of life. "Meditation," says St. John Damascene, "teaches us what is wanting in us, and prayer obtains it, in order that we may not be forever deprived of it. The former shows us the way, and the latter leads us to it; through meditation we learn the dangers that threaten us, by prayer we avoid them." (Sermon 11, St. Andrew's Feast).

Vocal prayer or simply prayer, as generally understood, is "asking God for things that are becoming" (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 83, a. 1); but the catechism comprises in its definition all vocal prayers, including thanksgiving, divine praises, adoration, acts of humility and other kindred acts, expressed in words or thoughts, by which we can worship God.

1. To pray we must lift our hearts to God from all worldly affections, for we address the Creator in prayer and not the creature. We may ask the saints or angels to be our intermediaries or advocates; but God alone can grant our petitions. This is what the catechism expresses, when it says that "prayer is the lifting up of our mind and heart," i. e., our intellect to advert to Whom we are speaking, and our hearts, or the affections of the soul, to center them on God, to Whom we pray.

2. We adore God when we recognize that God is all, and we are nothing; that He deserves our homage and our worship, as the Supreme Majesty, the Creator and Preserver of all things; and that we are entirely dependent on Him for all the benefits we pray for.

3. It is proper and just that we should be grateful to God for His liberality towards us all by bestowing upon us so many temporal and spiritual benefits: our creation, our preservation, our calling to the true Faith, our reconciliation through Baptism, the many graces received in the Sacraments and many other advantages of which we are not even conscious, these are all so many inducements to thank God for His innumerable benefits.

4. We are all sinners, for "a just man shall fall seven times." We should comprise among our sins the many inspirations we have neglected, and the proffered means of grace we have despised. How many contemn the frequent reception of the Sacraments, the surest means of grace! How many slight fervent and humble prayer, the always available and never-failing source of grace! How meet and just that we should frequently at the beginning of all our prayers, recognize that we are unworthy to appear in God's presence, but that we rely on His goodness and mercy, since "He will not despise a humble and contrite heart." (Psalm Miserere). The true penitent who

relies on the merits of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his sins is sure to be heard.

5. Finally, in prayer we lift up our minds and hearts to God to beg of Him all the graces we need, whether for soul or body, i. e., all graces, whether temporal for this life, or spiritual for eternal life hereafter.

Our prayers should above all have for object the spiritual benefits of the soul, the paramount blessings which make us good and lead to God, the Sovereign Good, and to eternal happiness. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 83, a. 5). Among the graces we should ask, are the graces to remain in God's friendship or to recover it through the remission of our sins in the Sacrament of Penance, if we have lost it; to please God by the practice of the virtues of our state of life or of a particular virtue we do not possess; to be able to overcome our evil inclinations and temptations; to rejoice now and forever in God's glory; to please Him in all what we do and to live and die holily. These and similar benefits we should constantly beg of our good Lord, for these alone are of everlasting advantage to us; we may ask them always without limit or condition, for we can never have enough of them.

6. We may, it is true, beg of God temporal goods, but only as secondary to the spiritual goods of the soul, and only provided they hinder not our advancement in spiritual life. (Ibid. a. 6).

Our Saviour Himself has taught us: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. vi. 33). It is evident that Christ wishes to make us understand that we must first seek the kingdom of heaven, as the main object of our solicitude, and then temporal goods only in so far as they may be useful to acquire the spiritual goods that lead to eternal glory hereafter. As we cannot always tell whether the temporal favors we ask may be advantageous for our eternal welfare, it is proper that we should pray for them conditionally, i. e., provided they be not detrimental to God's honor and glory and to the salvation of our souls.

The spiritual and temporal welfare of our neighbor may also be the object of our prayers. We are even bound to pray for our fellowmen. St. James teaches this clearly when he says: "Pray one for another that you may be saved." (James v. 16). We have explained for whom we are obliged to pray in another part of the book, when treating of the seventh spiritual work of mercy: prayer for the living and the dead. (Cfr. Lesson the Nineteenth, towards the end).

We should here take up the difficulty often proposed and solved by St. Thomas, viz., how do we know that our prayer

will not be lost when we pray for our neighbor? How can we ascertain that he has the proper dispositions and that he will not place obstacles to God's graces? "To pray for oneself is a condition attached to efficacious prayer, not for the purpose of meriting, but of obtaining what is asked. For it happens sometimes that prayers for another, although pious, persevering and referring to the things of salvation, do not produce their effect on account of obstacles coming from him for whom prayer is offered." (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 83, a. 7 to 2). The same holy Doctor gives the solution of that difficulty, when he explains the words of the Psalmist: "My prayer has returned to me" (Ps. xxxiv. 13), by saying:: "it means that if our prayer has not produced its effect, we shall nevertheless not be deprived of our recompense," for the merit of our prayer will come back to us.

298. Is prayer necessary to salvation?

Prayer is necessary to salvation, and without it no one having the use of reason can be saved.

The necessity of prayer rests on our relations to God, our Creator and Redeemer: we are dependent creatures and since we have nothing that we can call our own, except our sins, order and justice require that man should acknowledge his dependence on the Giver of all good; and as God is infinitely rich in all the good things we lack, He necessarily demands that we should make our needs known to Him, not that He does not know them, but because He wills that we confess our misery and poverty, and our dependence on Him for all that we have and all that we need.

Prayer is likewise a condition on which depends our happiness hereafter; even after we have been regenerated in the holy waters of Baptism. "After Baptism," says St. Thomas, "persevering prayer is necessary to obtain Heaven: for although sins are remitted through that Sacrament, concupiscence still remains, and wars against us interiorly, as the world and the devil combat us exteriorly." (St. Thos. P. III, q. 3, a. 5). "When one," he says elsewhere," has been justified through grace, he still must ask the gift of perseverance that he may avoid evil until his last breath."

The necessity of prayer for salvation rests on two undeniable truths which our faith compels us to accept: the first is that without the special grace of God, we cannot, for a considerable length of time, remain free from mortal sin; and

the second is that we cannot save ourselves without good works, for "Faith without works is dead." (James, ii. 26). The Council of Trent (Sess. 6, Can. 1 to 22) teaches that justification is a gift of God, which we cannot merit, that it is due to God's grace, and that we need God's grace to persevere in His friendship. (Cf. Lesson on Grace, No. 110; 112).

In order to admit the necessity of prayer as a means of salvation, and to be thoroughly convinced of it, we need only to understand that grace is usually not given us, unless we beg it of God, and this inference appears conclusive from the often inculcated obligation to pray and to pray always. St. Thomas teaches us that: "every man is obliged to pray, for the reason that he is obliged to seek the spiritual goods which God alone can grant; from which it follows that he cannot of himself secure them . . . . Prayer is not only necessary, but becomes a precept, when there is question of obtaining a grace to accomplish what the law of God prescribes." (4 Sent., dist. 15, a. 1, q. 3).

Prayer is the life of the Christian, and when one ceases praying he is like a fish out of water; he will slowly lose strength and die a spiritual death, the death of the soul. Therefore we should not wonder that our Lord Himself imposes without restriction the duty of prayer upon His disciples: "He spoke a parable . . . That we ought always to pray." (Luke xviii. 1) "Watch and pray always." (ib. xxi. 36). "Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation." (Mat. xxvi. 41). St. Peter and St. Paul teach the obligation of prayer with the same earnestness: "Be prudent and watch in prayer." (1 Peter iv. 7). "Pray without ceasing . . . for this is the will of God." (1 Thess v. 17, sq.)

Many other passages of Holy Scripture both of the Old and New Testament teach the obligation of prayer and its necessity in order to reach our eternal destiny, and Christ our Saviour prayed frequently and passed whole nights in prayer to give us the example of continual and persevering prayer. Let no one wonder then, that the devil is as much the sworn enemy of prayer as he is envious of our salvation. He leaves nothing undone to distract us and to cause ennui, to make prayer irksome and tiresome for us. With some he employs scruples, with others all kinds of temptations to deter them from their pious exercises, private and public prayer; and even he follows into the very temples, dedicated to God's worship, those whom he hopes to distract or whose devotions he aims to disturb for fear that their prayer might lead to the conversion of the sinner or be the means of encouraging the virtuous to persevere in grace or to strive for perfection.

299. At what particular times should we pray?

We should pray particularly on Sundays and holydays, every morning and night, in all dangers, temptations, and afflictions.

Our life should be a continuous prayer, not that we should neglect any obligations or duties thereby, but that we should do all things for God and with a view to pleasing Him; for thus we fulfill what our Lord enjoined when He said that we "ought always to pray." Those who know how to walk in the presence of God, and have always God before their eyes, learn how to converse with God and treat Him with a respectful familiarity, like a dear and loving son who cannot be separated from his father, or like a cherished and affectionate daughter who is always seen in company with her mother. St. Paul inculcated this truth when he wrote to the Corinthians: "Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatsoever else you do, do all for the glory of God." (1 Cor. x. 31). For such souls, no particular time can be assigned for prayer, because for them to pray is a delight, and they employ all their leisure time in communing with their God. But for the greatest number of people, who are either lukewarm or somewhat indifferent, and for those who are so occupied with worldly affairs that they find but little time for prayer, the case is different: they should be warned that their salvation depends on their compliance with the duty of prayer imposed upon all adults. For them is intended the present answer of the catechism that we should particularly pray: 1st, on Sundays and holydays, set apart by the Church for them to honor, glorify, praise and worship their Maker by assisting at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, by partaking of the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion, and by assisting at the evening services in the parochial church, if their home is not too distant. The hearing of Mass on Sundays and on all feasts of obligation, is imposed under pain of mortal sin and rightly; for man is a social be-

ing and as such he must worship God in public together with his fellow-men; there exists a family solidarity and there should be a social solidarity; what affects the family, affects also society at large. Religion in its public observance influences the individual, every member of the family and of society; moreover if the individual expects to join in the chorus of praises among the blessed in heaven, where all will be joy without alloy and everlasting festivity, he must join in the chorus of heartfelt sentiments of piety among his brethren on earth on the days set apart by Holy Church. To neglect for trivial reasons the duty of openly professing our faith, will necessarily lead to indifference and loss of faith.

2nd. We should pray morning and evening. For most people, especially laborers, business men and mothers of families, their occupations may prevent them from devoting much time to prayer in the morning; but they should as much as possible anticipate the day in doing what Scripture says of the Wise Man: "He will give his heart to resort early to the Lord that made him, and he will pray in the sight of the Most High; he will open his mouth in prayer, and will make supplication for his sins." (Eccli. xxxix. 6, 7). We learn from this text that true wisdom is obtained by resorting to prayer in the early morning. David expresses the same thought in the beginning of his Psalm lxii: "O God, My God, to Thee do I watch at break of day."

To those whose occupation allows it, assistance at early Mass and the reception of Holy Communion are earnestly recommended; to neglect such an opportunity seems nothing less than contempt of God's greatest gifts. Even the busiest man or woman should snatch a few minutes of a busy hour, at least to kneel down before a crucifix and recite with great faith, devotion and humility, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed and the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity; they should also offer up their actions of the day

to God and firmly resolve to avoid all wilful sins and their near occasions.

As to evening prayers, there seems but little excuse for not performing them as a regular family practice in common with all the domestics of the house. For such devotions a prayer-book is advisable, and besides the prayers already mentioned for the morning, the evening devotions should contain an examination of conscience, in which the occupations of the day are reviewed with the sins that were committed and the good works that were omitted through negligence; and afterwards a sincere act of contrition for all the shortcomings of the day, as well as for all the sins of our lives should not be omitted. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin is also strongly recommended, and once a week the Litany of the Saints or of the Sacred Heart or of the Holy Name of Jesus, if its recitation did not take place in the morning.

3rd. We should pray also in all dangers, temptations and afflictions, in order that we may conduct ourselves in a Christian manner in those circumstances in which a special grace of God is required. In danger of bodily harm which we cannot personally overcome, we should rely upon God's help to rescue us, and be resigned to God's will, knowing well that God permits many catastrophies, such as shipwrecks, tempests and conflagrations for our own good, as a punishment of our misdeeds, or for our correction, or as a means to satisfy for our sins. No real harm can come to those who put their trust in God; death is welcome to the just who see in it the fulfillment of God's design. In temptations we should place all our confidence in God's graces, relying on St. Paul's assurance that "He (God) will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will also make with temptation issue, that we may be able to bear it." (I Cor. x. 13). All misfortunes are so many trials sent by God to test our virtue. It is in this sense that we must understand the words of the Angel Raphael to the elder Tobias: "Because thou wast

acceptable to the Lord, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee." (Tobias xii. 13). Finally, we must have recourse to God in great afflictions, lest we may possibly be induced to murmur against God. Afflictions may have their source in the ill-will of rational creatures, i. e., of the devils and our fellow-men, and then God permits them, but cannot will them, for He cannot be the author of evil; if they have their source in the elements as the natural consequences of nature's laws, God has willed them from all eternity. Can we withstand God? Is He not free to do what He sees fit? Has He not the right of life and death over all that exists? Who is God's counsellor? Learn from the holy man Job how to behave in adversities, in pains and afflictions, and exclaim with him: "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away: as it has pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job i. 21).

If our love of God is not sufficient to make us conform our will to His, let our own interest supply the deficiency. There is nothing to be gained by impatience or murmuring; but peace of mind and heart is the reward of humble submission to God's designs, and joy and happiness is the recompense of complacency in His holy will. How the saints and martyrs rejoiced in the midst of the greatest sufferings, in the conviction that, by suffering joyfully, they executed the holy decrees of their Father in heaven, and thereby became the chosen instruments for the execution of the wise and merciful designs of a loving God!

300. How should we pray?

We should pray: 1st, with attention; 2nd, with a sense of our helplessness and dependence upon God; 3rd, with trust in God's goodness; 4th, with a great desire for the graces we beg of God; 5th, with perseverance.

1st. With attention. There are two kinds of vocal prayer: the strictly vocal prayer said aloud or uttered

by the voice, and the prayer said silently and expressed by the lips only. Vocal prayer understood in its strictest sense has a greater aptitude to rivet our attention to the subject of our prayer than that pronounced by the lips only, and that for three reasons: a) because vocal prayer more than silent prayer excites in us interior devotion and helps us more to lift up our minds and hearts to God. "We address vocal prayers to God," says St. Augustine, "to awaken our attention by the sound of the words. . . . and more efficaciously to excite in us holy desires." (Ep. 121, to Probus c. 9); b) because we should honor God by all the faculties of our being, i. e., by the voice as well as by the mind and the will. Prayers said silently honor God less because fewer faculties of the body take part in silent prayer than in strictly vocal prayer; c) because vocal prayer more than prayer said with the lips only, offers a passage to the pious affections of the heart and nourishes the fire of divine love, by allowing its flames to shoot up towards heaven. (Cf. St. Thos., ii. 2, q. 65, a. 12).

Notwithstanding that all prayers, whether strictly vocal or silent prayer expressed with the lips only, have a tendency to awaken our attention, even vocal prayer may lack it, and thus we deserve the blame which Our Lord directed to the Jews, by quoting the Prophet Isaias: "This people honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me." (Matt xv. 8). In order that prayer may be acceptable to God, the mind and the heart must concur with the lips and in strictly vocal prayer with the voice as well. It was thus heartily that Anna prayed, for "she multiplied prayer before the Lord . . . Now Anna spoke in her heart, and only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard at all." (1 Kings, i. 12, 13).

We should remember that attention is the soul of prayer, and that as the body, when it is deprived of life, is but a hideous corpse, likewise, prayer said with wilful distraction is an abomination in the sight of God.

Therefore, before beginning any prayer, we should place ourselves in the presence of God and pray interiorly, i. e., with an attentive mind in accord with the heart, whilst the lips and the tongue pronounce the words. There are three kinds of attention, and I give them in the order of their merit, beginning with the least meritorious: attention to the words, so as to pronounce them correctly; attention to the sense of the words; and lastly, attention to the words as well as to the favor or grace we beg of God. The last is to be recommended to all, particularly to people who cannot penetrate the whole sense of such prayers as the Psalms or extracts from other parts of Holy Scripture.

2nd. With humility, i. e., with a sense of our helplessness and of our dependence on God. We have only to throw, as it were, a casual glance on our weak, corrupted nature, so prone to evil and slow to good, to recognize that we can do nothing good without God's help. Besides, we have learned how indispensable grace is to the least thought or desire conducive to salvation. Now, justice demands that we acknowledge that we are indebted to God for all His favors, that our fate is in His hands, and that we need His help at all times, in all places and circumstances for the body as well as for the soul. Our mind should frequently dwell on the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican: the former confided in his fasts, alms-deeds and strict observance of the Mosaic Law; the latter, overwhelmed by the recollection of his many sins, did not even dare look up to heaven, but struck his breast, saying: "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner." The humble Publican was heard and forgiven, but the proud Pharisee was rejected. This result was already foreshadowed by what Our Lord had prophesied in Isaias: "To whom shall I have respect but to him that is poor and little and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at My word." (Isaias lxvi. 2).

Although we base the success of our prayers and supplications principally on the mercy and goodness of God, still without humility or a sense of our helpless-

ness, our petitions could not be acceptable to God; for He resisteth the proud, and the humble find favor in His sight.

St. Thomas speaks of only four conditions of prayer, saying: "Four conditions are laid down, and with their concurrence we always obtain what we ask; these conditions are: that one ask for himself, things necessary for salvation, with piety (confidence) and perseverance." (St. Thos. II. 2, s. 83, a. 15 to 2). Of the first two conditions we have treated in number 297. We have now still to speak of the last two conditions: confidence and perseverance. You will note that the Angelic Doctor does not mention "humility" as one of the four conditions, but he speaks of its necessity when he says: "Faith (confidence) is necessary with respect to God Whom we address, in order that we may obtain of Him what we ask; but humility is also necessary to him who asks, in order by it to admit his need." Hence, there are five qualities or requisites for an efficacious prayer. It is possible that St. Thomas does not name "humility" among the four conditions, because he that places his whole confidence and trust in God, necessarily mistrusts himself and, therefore, prays with humility.

3. We should pray with trust in God's goodness and mercy. Of all the qualities of a good prayer, confidence in God, or trust in His goodness, is the most essential, and if it is well understood, it contains all the other requisites; for we must hold with St. Thomas that "prayer principally rests on faith (confidence), not if it be considered as a meritorious act, for as such it rests principally on charity, but in order that it may with certainty obtain (what is asked)." St. Thos. II. 2, q. 83, a. 15 to 3).

This doctrine is frequently taught by our Saviour, Who promised to grant all that is asked, provided it be asked with an unwavering confidence. "And all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive" (Matt. xxi. 22), and again: "Therefore I say to you, all things whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that you shall receive, and they shall come unto you." (Mark, xi. 24). To the man who brought his son possessed by an evil spirit and asked Jesus to cure him, the Saviour said: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark, ix. 22). St.

James, who undoubtedly preached the doctrine he had learned at the feet of his Master, writes for the Christians of his day the following: "If anyone of you want wisdom, let him ask it of God . . . and it shall be given him; but let him ask it in faith, nothing wavering." (James i. 5-7). The same Apostle explains his meaning by saying that he that wavers or doubts is like a wave of the sea, which is moved and carried about by the wind, and therefore he cannot expect any favor from the Lord, but by believing firmly in God's promises, he honors Him and thereby deserves their fulfillment.

Why should we trust so firmly in God's promises? Because God cannot deceive us: He is infinitely wise, good and omnipotent; even had He never made such formal promises, He would still grant us whatsoever we ask that is becoming, for His bounty is infinite. His wisdom sees the good contained in our prayer, and His omnipotence executes what His wisdom and goodness have decreed. How much more readily will He hear us, after having made such formal promises to grant us the petitions we trustfully address to Him. This confidence demanded of us resides partly in our intellect and partly in the will: in the intellect, because we firmly believe that God is infinitely good and true to His promises, and that His infinite perfections in some manner force Him to acquiesce in our proper requests; and also in the will, because this firm faith in God and in His promises determines the will to hope firmly that He will grant us the favors we ask.

The greater our confidence and trust in God, the more urgent will be our request and the greater the effects we can expect from our supplications. For confidence is not only necessary to secure a favorable answer to our prayer, but we may well believe that the success of our prayer will be proportionate to the confidence and trust we have in God's goodness and promises; thus, summing up all that we have said on this subject, we conclude: the greater our trust, the more certain and the more abundant will be the favors we shall receive.

4. We should pray with a great desire of the graces we beg of God. This requisite is equivalent to the earnestness and sincerity of our prayers. It rests upon the value we place upon the result of our supplications and upon the conviction that God usually grants no grace except we ask it. He that prays with the lips only, is indifferent as to the results; but he that is aware of the

greatness of the favor, and values it more than anything else, will pray with earnestness and a great desire of obtaining what he asks. Habitual sinners, who are not willing to forego either their sinful pleasures or the near occasions of sin, may pray with the lips; but their hearts take no part in it, and therefore they do not sincerely desire to be heard: such a prayer is but an insult to the Divine Majesty and does not deserve the name of prayer. We have an example of such a state of mind and heart in St. Augustine who, in his youth, as he relates himself, almost feared to be heard too soon, when he prayed for chastity, for fear that he would be obliged to forego the sinful pleasures and unlawful amusements, of which he had been a slave until then.

When we pray with a great desire to obtain from God what we ask, our prayer may be called fervent, and St. Augustine in speaking of it says, that "a great desire is a great noise in the ears of God." Such was the prayer of the man who was born blind: He heard that Jesus was passing in the streets of Jericho and when the passersby told him to keep his peace, he cried the louder: "Have mercy on me, Son of David."

In order to obtain this ardent desire of what we ask, it is only necessary that our prayers should possess the three qualities already explained: namely, that we consider with attention and with earnestness the greatness of the favor we beg of God; that, besides, we be absolutely conscious that He alone can grant it; and that, finally, we have a firm confidence and trust in God's goodness and mercy to grant our request. Our prayer will then of necessity be accompanied with a great desire of what we beg of God.

It is also evident that perseverance and fervor in prayer are nearly related, for one is the consequence of the other: the ardor of the desire to obtain what a beggar asks makes him importunate in pressing and in repeating his request for alms.

5. We should pray with perseverance. Among the people of this world, perseverance in begging a favor, after it has been refused, makes the supplicant importune and annoying, and he angers rather than propitiates the otherwise kindly disposed. What conciliates and moves to pity the powerful and the rich? Their own interest: honor or vainglory usually inclines them to grant favors, but perseverance in asking seldom will.

It is totally different with our good Father in heaven. Who requires perseverance in prayer; not that He is loath to grant our petitions, but that He often delays His gifts, because He wishes to test our patience, our humility, our trust in His goodness; or He defers acceding to our requests in order to grant more liberally whatever we desire, at a future time, if we persevere in prayer; or, as is more frequently the case, He delays granting our request, because what we ask is prejudicial to our spiritual welfare.

We learn from St. Augustine that his saintly mother prayed fervently during six years for his conversion. The special favors she asked for her son were as follows: she prayed that he might become a Christian, and the good and generous God made him an exemplary, zealous and holy bishop; she prayed that he might lead a chaste life in an honorable conjugal union, and after his complete conversion he led a most austere life by practicing in a sublime degree the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience, and he laid down the fundamental rules of the perfect life in religious communities. St. Monica also prayed for the conversion of her son from heresy, and he became one of the greatest lights of the Church, the defender of her doctrines and prerogatives, and the scourge of the heresies of his time. We see by this example that if God delays granting our requests, His goodness and wisdom shine forth the brighter in granting more than what is asked, if we only persevere in prayer.

We have no assurance that God will hear our prayers for any other object than for our spiritual welfare; for, as we have seen, the Saviour has taught us to seek first the kingdom of God and His justice or justification through a holy life. Furthermore, God has not promised to hear us forthwith. He sometimes concedes what we ask after our first prayer, but He may wait days and months and years. He acts in all cases according to impenetrable counsels of His all-wise Providence. He seeks, we know, in all that He does, His own glory and our spiritual welfare. We should then remain convinced that God will never fail in His promises and will grant us, at least by degrees or little by little, all that is not an obstacle to our salvation, provided we persevere in prayer.

We find beautiful examples of this doctrine in the four Gospels; for the sake of brevity, we only indicate them, hoping that the reader will have recourse to the texts of Holy Scripture: the cure of the man born blind at Jericho (Mark x. 46-52); the paralytic who was healed by Christ after waiting thirty-eight

years for someone to put him into the miraculous pond, called Probatica (John v. 1-9); but the most remarkable of all was the miraculous cure of a young woman, cruelly tormented by a devil, the daughter of a Canaanite mother (Matt. xv. 22, sq.). This example is the most remarkable, because the desolate mother had implored our Lord to cure her daughter and He seemed not even to deign to notice her, and the Apostles had asked the Saviour to dismiss her; but she, nothing daunted, threw herself at His feet, and although He showed no signs of commiseration, she persisted in her fervent petitions in favor of her daughter, until Jesus, admiring her trust in His goodness and power, finally said to her: "O woman, great is thy faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt."

301. Are prayers said with distractions of any avail?

Prayers said with wilful distractions are of no avail.

From this answer we judge that if we pray with distractions that are not wilful, our prayers are still acceptable to God: this is undeniable, provided we take our precaution against all distractions. Before beginning the recitation of any prayer, be it only a Hail Mary, we ought to lay aside all thoughts of earth and things of earth, and think only of God, the Giver of all good, and of the spiritual favor we beg of Him. Accordingly, the "Our Father" begins with the words: "Our Father Who art in heaven." How apt these words are to direct our attention to God in heaven, His dwelling-place! Likewise, before the Canon of the Mass, at the Preface, the priest calls on the people to raise their hearts to God, saying: "Sursum corda" (on high all hearts) and the people answer: "Habemus ad Dominum", i. e., we have (lifted them) towards the Lord.

Even when we have raised our hearts to God, or placed ourselves in His presence, with a respectful consciousness that He sees and hears us, we still may have distractions, and they become wilful, if we knowingly admit them for the sake of the pleasure they afford, or if we deliberately occupy our mind with them; but they may also have their source in our natural weakness or in the suggestions of the evil one. "If any one is wilfully distracted," says St. Thomas, "it is a sin that prevents all fruit.' (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 83, a. 3, to 3).

What should we do when distractions assail us? We should recollect ourselves each time, and place ourselves again in the

presence of God; and by this means, although the distraction may come back a hundred times, our prayer will not be the less acceptable to God. "It must be said that he who applies himself to prayer with a spiritual taste (i. e., who finds a spiritual joy in prayer), prays in spirit and truth, even if his mind thereafter wanders through weakness." (l. c., to 1). Distractions should never keep us from our usual prayer, for the Angelic Doctor teaches us in the same article (l. c., to 2) that even the most favored souls, who have arrived at a high degree of contemplation, are sometimes suddenly torn from it through human frailty.

302. Which are the prayers most recommended to us?

The prayers most recommended to us are the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, the Confiteor, and the Acts of Faith, Hope, Love and Contrition.

Christ Himself taught us the "Our Father," and this fact alone assures us that it is the best of all prayers. Besides, as St. Thomas after St. Augustine teaches us, it contains in seven petitions all that we can becomingly and with propriety beg of God. What is prayer? Is it not the interpreter, in some manner, of our desires before God? Therefore we beg of God only what we may properly desire, and in the order we should make our desires known. The "Our Father" teaches us both the proper things to be included in our petition and the order we should adopt.

It is evident that our ultimate end should be the first object of our desires, and thereafter whatever may tend towards it; but God is our ultimate end and our desires tend towards Him in two ways: by the first, we seek the glory of God and by the second we seek our own glory and desire to participate in His glory, and thus in the former way we love God for His own sake and in the latter we love ourselves in God. Hence, after the preamble "Our Father Who art in heaven," by which we raise our minds and hearts to God, Whom we address in our prayer, the first petition is "Hallowed be Thy name," that is, glorified be Thy name; and the second is: "Thy kingdom come," that is, we pray for

the kingdom of heaven, where we shall gloriously reign with God for all eternity.

He that desires the end, must also desire the means to reach it. By what means can we obtain the desired kingdom? In no other way than by doing the will of God upon earth. We note also that the saints and angels in heaven are so united to God in perfect conformity with His holy will, that no closer union can be conceived, and therefore we unite those two truths in the third petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Besides, we should not fail to remark that if we can obtain the kingdom of heaven by doing God's holy will, we also glorify God by conforming our will to His, and therefore the same petition expresses also the desire to see God glorified on earth as He is in heaven.

Our prayer must not stop here, for, alas, we are by nature weak and inclined to evil, and the world and the devil conspire to compass our ruin. How then can we do the will of God on earth as it is in heaven? God alone can supply our deficiency, and He will give us strength and power to serve Him in all things, if we ask it, for He has promised it; and therefore we say in the fourth petition: "Give us this day our daily bread." What? O Lord, will bread give us power and strength to do Thy holy will? Our Master has principally in view the bread that came down from heaven (Cf. John, vi. 6) which we receive in Holy Communion. All the other Sacraments are as a preparation or a condition to receive the Holy Eucharist worthily and with fruit, and hence, when we pray for the heavenly bread to be given us, we also beg of God that He may give us all the other Sacraments with the graces they bestow; for as bread is the principal food of the body, so is the Holy Eucharist the principal Sacrament, and in it we include all the others.

We may also understand by the word "bread", not only all food that supports the body, but also all the

other gifts of God useful to the health of the body and of the soul, in so far as these gifts may conduce to serving God the better; but let us not forget what the Saviour has taught us, when He said: "Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. vi. 33).

The bread from heaven we beg of God would be all-sufficient to do His holy will and reach the kingdom prepared for us, if there were not so many obstacles in our way. The first obstacle to our entering the realms of eternal glory is sin: we are born children of wrath with original guilt on our souls, and after this guilt is washed away, we still may lose our baptismal innocence by mortal sin. God alone can take away its stain and all punishment due to it. Moreover, the condition of our forgiveness is that we also shall forgive our neighbors' offenses done to us; hence the fifth petition: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass againt us."

Now there still remain two petitions to remove all dangers to our salvation. Sin being the obstacle that would deprive us of our kingdom, we must beg of God to remove the insuperable incentives to sin. Which are these incentives to sin? They are the enemies of our salvation: the world, the flesh and the devil. Through them we encounter the most common temptations which assail us and allure us to sin, and hence they are most to be feared. Therefore, we beg of God in the sixth petition :"Lead us not into temptation." In this petition, we do not ask absolute freedom from temptation, for that would be to deprive ourselves of the best opportunity to acquire greater merit before God; but we implore God that He may not allow any temptation to take hold of us, which we could not overcome with the graces He is willing to bestow upon us. This accords with what St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "Let no temptation take hold on you, but such as is human. And God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted

above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. x. 13). Thus when we say "lead us not," we do not mean that God can directly tempt us to sin, for "God tempts no one" (Jas. i. 13), but that God allows us to be tempted for our good. Hence in our petition, we pray that our good God may not allow us to be tempted above our strength, or if He permits fearful temptations to assail us, we beg that He may grant us extraordinary and efficacious graces to overcome them.

Besides the direct temptations just mentioned, there are many other occasions of sin, as well as other evils, that may impede our advancement in virtue, or in the acquisition of additional merit and graces. All these are included in the word "evil" in the seventh and last petition: "But deliver us from evil. Amen." The word "Amen," at the end of the Our Father, refers to all the seven petitions and means: May all our petitions be heard, and we hereby renew again all our requests.

The evil from which we beg to be delivered is all evil whether of the soul or of the body, such as paralysis, apoplexy, lightning, tempests, earthquakes, pestilence, famine, war and kindred calamities which tend to the spiritual or material detriment of the individual and of society. They are named in the Litany of the Saints; and of all these and other evils the one most to be dreaded, is a sudden and unprovided death.

2. The Hail Mary. The Hail Mary, or the Angelic Salutation, as it is also called, because it begins with the salutation which the Angel Gabriel addressed to the Virgin Mary, was not, like the Our Father, taught by Our Lord, nor is it the work of any one person; but those to whom we owe that beautiful prayer, were the inspired servants of God. The Hail Mary, as to its authorship, must be divided into three parts: the first part we owe to the Angel Gabriel, who, when he came from Heaven to announce to the Virgin, whose name was Mary, that God had

chosen her to be the Mother of the Redeemer, said to her: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." (Luke, i. 28). We owe the second part to St. Elizabeth, the wife of Zachary and the future mother of St. John the Baptist, of whom, when she received the visit of the Mother of God, and heard her salutation, St. Luke relates that "the infant leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and she cried out with a loud voice and said: 'Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.'" The word "Jesus" is added because the Angel had announced to the Virgin that the Son to be born of her should be called Jesus. The last part of the Hail Mary is the inspired word of God in the form of a prayer, added by the infallible Church, and we address it to one who bore the Saviour in her womb, who is truly the Mother of God and whose intercession therefore must be all-powerful before the throne of God.

3. The Apostles' Creed. The Apostles' Creed is a profession of faith and contains the principal mysteries and truths revealed by Christ. The frequent repetition of the Creed enlivens our faith, without which it is impossible to please God. The Creed has been fully explained in the first part of the catechism.

4. Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity. Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity are short professions of the three theological virtues, which surpass all other virtues in dignity and merit, as they have God for their immediate object: these virtues are explained in different parts of the catechism. These acts should be recited often, and especially when temptations against anyone of the three divine virtues assail us.

5. The act of contrition cannot be repeated too often, if said with compunction and sorrow of heart. "The just man shall fall seven times and shall rise again." (Prov. xxiv. 16). How shall he rise again? By

striking his breast and saying: Lord have mercy on me, a sinner; or by making a sincere act of contrition. To sin without remorse is wickedness and "the wicked fall down into evil" (Ib.) and into evil ways.

6. The Confiteor is in the nature of a confession of all our sins and therefore it is also a kind of act of contrition with the addition of a supplication to the saints, asking their prayers in our behalf that we may obtain from God the remission of our sins.

All these prayers should be learned by heart by all children, even before they can fully understand their whole meaning, so that they may acquire the habit of reciting them long before they come to the use of reason. The custom of devoutly making the sign of the cross in the beginning and at the end of all our prayers, as well as of all our other occupations, should be preserved as sacred.

Part III.

LESSON THE TWENTY-NINTH

ON THE COMMANDMENTS

INTRODUCTION

We have come to the third part of the catechism, the part which treats of what we must do to reach our eternal destiny. Our duties and obligations towards God, our neighbor and ourselves are laid down for us in the Commandments of God and of His Church, which we shall accordingly explain successively and in detail. The obligations arising from the authority of God and from the authority of the Church, cannot be contradictory. The Church received its infallible authority from its Founder, the God-Man, and as God cannot contradict Himself, neither can the Church teach a morality opposed to the positive law of the ten Commandments or of the natural law.

Natural Law, the Decalogue, Civil and Ecclesiastical Laws

There is within us a natural law which teaches and prescribes what is intrinsically good, and forbids what is intrinsically bad. This voice of conscience is certain and cannot be drowned, for it is the judgment of our reason that condemns what is evil and approves what is good. And who is the author of that law that imposes itself on us, and even in spite of us, but God, Whose divine attributes of holiness, truth, justice, etc., approve what is good, truthful and just, and condemn what is opposed to it? He, the all-wise God, delights in order, and wills that the natural law be observed and forbids its infringement. Under this natural law the descendants of Adam and Eve lived until the promulgation of the Decalogue or Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai; not that God had never before made His will known in particular cases, for He spoke to Adam and Eve and revealed to them His commandment not to eat of the forbidden fruit, with a threat of punishment that would follow their disobedience; and after their fall, He revealed the punishment of their sin and made the promise of a Redeemer; He rebuked Cain for his sin and revealed to him the punishment for his crime; Noah, after the flood, was forbidden to eat flesh with blood. God, moreover, had imposed on Abraham and his descendants the rite of circumcision. But no general law, which was binding upon any

people or nation, much less upon all mankind, was proclaimed until the time of Moses. The natural law, even after the promulgation of the Decalogue, remained for the Gentiles the only norm and rule by which they should regulate their actions and judge between good and evil, as St. Paul teaches us in his epistle to the Romans. (Rom. ii).

The Decalogue

Now what of the Decalogue with regard to the natural law? It is the epitome or compendium of the natural law proclaimed by God, divided into ten commandments, and given through Moses to the Jewish people. The first three commandments refer to our duties towards God, and the other seven to our duties towards our neighbor. The whole natural law can be reduced to two principal commandments: the love of God and the love of our neighbor, although it teaches us also our duties towards ourselves, as our Saviour implicitly inculcates, when He commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves, i. e., as we should love ourselves, according to the light of our reason and the voice of conscience informed and directed by the teachings of the Gospel and the decisions of Holy Church.

Although the Christian Religion is proclaimed in the whole world and to the four corners thereof, still there are many uncivilized people who live in invincible ignorance of the Gospel of Christ; and for them the natural law and their conscience is the only rule, however defective it may be.

As for the members of the true Church of God, the law of nature has seldom to be appealed to. In order to know and ascertain what our duties are, Christ Himself has taught us our obligations towards God, towards ourselves, and towards our neighbor; and the Church, with the authority of her Founder, has decided all important cases of morals as well as of faith, so that "hearing the Church," is now the only practicable principle underlying the morality of her members.

Civil Law

Just civil laws must also be considered as another source of obligation; for he that resisteth the legitimate authority, although established only for the temporal welfare of its members, resisteth the authority of God. All power comes from God, as St. Paul teaches us: "Let every soul be subject to higher powers, for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained by God. Therefore he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation." (Rom. xiii. 1-12).

That the state, or civil authority, in any rightfully estab-

lished society, has the power to frame laws for the temporal welfare of all its subjects, is certain and undeniable; for this right springs necessarily from the very nature of man as a social being depending upon others for his temporal welfare, and as a being inclined to seek the society of others for his comfort, pleasure, or consolation and advice. He comes upon earth in a state of utmost helplessness: without the care of parents or others, he cannot for many years, unaided, preserve his feeble existence; and in this respect he is far inferior even to the brute. The relation of the offspring to those, who after God have given it life, creates parental authority, and this authority, with the correlative obligation of children to honor and obey their parents, is the foundation of civil society. Patriarchal authority might still be invoked in many parts of the world, if humanity, as it were, in its cradle, still enjoyed the boon of a longevity reaching to nine hundred and more years, and if people had remained simple in their habits. Modern civilization, with an ever-increasing aspiration and demand for greater comforts, and with a continual search for what may procure it, even in far-distant lands, has brought about the mixing of families and races; and more than all, the ambitions of conquerors have been efficient causes of the grouping together of many families and even of races into nations with distinctive governments. This combination and union of families and peoples with a community of interests, became often imperative for preservation and security against other encroaching nations, as well as against the many crimes we have all to deplore, even in the best regulated society.

The natural principle underlying the formation of any government is that there are greater advantages in union, through combined efforts, tending to the common good of all its subjects. Those efforts must be regulated by fixed laws determining the reciprocal rights and obligations of each individual subject. One thing seems clear and imperative upon the state, viz., that as a state is based upon parental authority, this latter authority must be safeguarded and preserved as sacred in all things consistent with the general welfare.

That the duty of respect and obedience to legitimate civil authority obliges its subjects in conscience, requires no other proof than that without it the just efforts of the state to secure for its subjects their liberty in the pursuit of happiness, would be frustrated, and many secret crimes would be left unpunished; and moreover much good would be left undone to the great detriment of society at large.

The Prince of the Apostles teaches us the Master's doctrine on submission to kings and governors in his first Epistle; and it will repay those who make light of the obligation to respect

and obey their civil superiors, to read the second half of the second chapter of that Epistle. (1 Peter, ii. 13. sq.)

It may not be out of place to remark that as subjects are bound to honor and obey the authorities of their respective countries, a correlative duty is imposed upon rulers and magistrates to govern for the best interest of all their subjects; in the same manner as an honest father of a well-regulated family conducts the affairs of the family to the best advantage of all the children.

Ecclesiastical Law

The Church, being a perfect society, established by Christ to lead her members to eternal salvation, has the right to make laws tending to their spiritual welfare and to forbid what might endanger it or deprive them of it. It is only in particular cases, for which no positive law exists, that we may appeal to the natural law, and as our reason has been obscured by the fall of our first parents, we should follow its apparent dictates, at least in matters of importance, only after consulting virtuous, prudent and learned men. The Church is also the interpreter of the natural law, for natural law being imprinted in the soul of every human being, is, in a sense, a natural revelation, and the Church is the divinely instituted judge of all revelation. She is also the interpreter of the Decalogue and the supreme and infallible judge of the justice and equity of all human law. Revealed truth comprises matters of faith and morals, and all questions in so far as they regard faith or morals, whether they be social, political or religious, fall under her jurisdiction. Thus the Church has decided the unlawfulness of secret societies, and among social problems she has condemned the doctrine and evil tendencies of some forms of socialism.

The Church legislates only for her subjects, who are in duty bound to accept and follow the decisions of the bishops of the Church and of the Supreme Pontiff; but she never interferes with the freedom of her members in all political and social problems, unless danger to truth or morals lurks in the rules and regulations or in the object in view of the organization to which they are, or wish to be, affiliated.

What if civil power and ecclesiastical authority are at variance? There should be no strife between ecclesiastical and civil power, for both powers derive their authority from God: and as the former is founded for the spiritual welfare of its members and the latter for the temporal welfare of its subjects, there is no room for antagonism. In temporal matters, the subjects must obey the state, and in spiritual matters all should obey the authority established by Jesus Christ Himself, viz., the Catholic Church. If ecclesiastical laws and civil laws are an-

tagonistic, we should endeavor to obey both, and if that cannot be done, recourse should be had to the supreme authority of the Church, the interpreter by divine right of all just and equitable laws.

THE COMMANDMENTS

We tend towards God by faith or by believing whatever He has revealed, by hope or by trusting in His promises to give us eternal life and the graces necessary to attain it, and by charity or by loving God and His holy will. "Now there remain faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greater of these is charity." (1 Cor. xiii. 13). Charity is the greatest of the three, because, during our pilgrimage on earth it supposes faith and hope, and identifies us with God as far as a rational creature can identify itself by its intellect and will with its Creator. Faith and hope will pass away when we arrive in the presence of the Most High, but love is perfected by the sight and the enjoyment of the God in Whom we have believed and in Whom we have hoped.

From this consideration we must necessarily conclude that the object or subject-matter of our love or charity should form our frequent study, for it is nothing less than God and His holy will. David made the law of God his constant meditation, and in his first psalm, which may be considered as an introduction to all the others, he exults over the happiness of the man whose "will is in the law of the Lord and who shall meditate on His laws night and day." (Ps. i. 2). Hence we may judge of the great importance of this part of the catechism, in which we shall learn whatever God has commanded us. The goodness of God will dispense many an ignorant Christian for his want of profound knowledge of many truths of revelation, but at the day of judgment our actions and our moral lives will be open to severe scrutiny. Without faith we cannot please God, and without hope we should lose courage in the struggle for salvation; but without charity we should resemble the man of whom St. James speaks, "who is the hearer of the word and not the doer" (James i. 23), who admires the sublimity of the doctrine of Christ, or finds His proffered reward very desirable, but neglects His holy will and fails to put it into practice. Alas, this is but all too common, and we ascribe the indifference of many—not only among the ignorant, but among the otherwise well-informed, to the lack of instruction on God's Commandments. Among them there are also not a few who through natural inclination, kindness or compassion are liberal to the poor, alleviate misery and suffering, but lose the largest share, if not all, of their merit by confounding charity with natural

benevolence. Hence we see another reason for the necessity of making God's law our study and meditation.

Charity ennobles and perfects our thoughts and affections, drawing them, as well as the will, away from created things to the very presence of God, Who demands a subjection of our whole being to His holy will. In order to raise our will to the supernatural, the virtue of charity is necessary; for how can we raise our thoughts and desires from the natural, i. e., from what regards the life of the body and its necessities or comforts, to the supernatural? By our natural reason we can, at most, know and love God only as Creator of the universe, the Ruler and Keeper of all that He has made. It is by the virtue of charity, infused into our souls, that we are able to love God—not as known to us by our reason, but as revealed to us by Himself—and love Him above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for His sake likewise. From this we necessarily conclude that charity cannot be merited: it is a free gift of God, and in a wonderful and incomprehensible manner it acts upon the soul already informed by faith; it confirms our trust in God and animates our desire of a future reward and of the graces necessary to attain it. Our trust and our desire come to us through the virtue of hope, but it is charity that moves us to take hold of the means of salvation; by it we love and we desire the means of grace as well as the bountiful Giver Himself; and, always under the same influence, we offer up our will to the Supreme Majesty, subjecting ourselves with heart and soul to the divine Will in all things.

303. Is it enough to belong to God's Church in order to be saved?

It is not enough to belong to the Church to be saved, but we must also keep the Commandments of God and of the Church.

The Church, or God's Church, of which there is question here, can be none other than the Catholic Church, the only Church our Lord Jesus Christ has instituted to continue His mission upon earth, that Church founded upon the Apostles, but which continues to live in their successors, that Church to which Christ pointed when He said: "Hear the Church and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (Matt. xviii. 17), that Church to which He

referred, when He said to Peter: "Thou art rock (Peter) and upon this rock I will build My Church", that Church of which Peter's successors are still the rock and Christ the Corner-stone, for the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. To belong to the Church, only valid Baptism is required, and the baptized person remains a member until he leaves the communion of the Church by wilful heresy, or is separated from it through schism or excommunication; therefore sinners remain in the communion of the Church, and they are not entirely cut off from the prayers of the faithful on earth, of the saints in heaven and of the souls in purgatory. Many passages of Holy Scripture teach us that sinners are not excluded from the Church of God: the parable of the sower and of the cockle (Matt. xiii 24-30), also also the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins (Matt. xxv. 1-13), that of the fishers' net containing good and bad fishes (Matt. xiii. 47-50), etc. Sinners are allowed in the Church and not heretics or schismatics, because the ordinary sinner sins not through obstinacy, but because he is overcome by violent temptations, or through love of pleasure, or through indifference or bad example. Christ came to seek sinners, and ate with them, but inveighed with a holy anger against the hypocritical and obstinate Pharisees who through envy and hatred refused to accept His holy doctrine.

Our reason tells us clearly that it is not enough to be a member of the Church of God to be saved. Conscience speaks louder than our passions or evil inclinations; and the sinner may try to drown that voice, but the natural law inscribed in our hearts is so forcible that it cannot be ignored. Whoever has enough intelligence to become convinced of the existence of God, feels that his Maker has a right to his services and a right to dictate what kind of service He may demand of him. But God has instituted a Church to teach us not only what we shall believe in order to be saved, but also what we shall do to gain heaven. The authority of the Church has been fully explained and we need not repeat what has been said on its holiness, authority, perpetuity and infallability. The Church teaches the positive law of God, i. e., all He has commanded, and in particular the Ten Commandments, with all the obli-

gations they impose upon us as well as what they forbid. Besides, as has been explained in the introduction to this third part of this Catechism, the Church is the interpreter of the natural law, and, being a perfect society instituted to lead its members to perfect and never-ending happiness, she has also the right to impose upon its members such obligations as will help them to attain the object of her mission, viz., eternal life for all her subjects.

304. Which are the commandments that contain the whole law of God?

The commandments that contain the whole law of God are these two: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole strength and with thy whole mind; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

It is well that the sense of these two commandments be fully understood, as well as their relation to each other, before the Ten Commandments are explained in detail. Notwithstanding that so much is demanded by these two commandments, and that without aid from on High it would be utterly impossible to comply with them as we should, they are taken textually from Holy Scripture; they are the words of Christ Himself, and they comprise the answer He made to a doctor of the law, who, with consummate hypocrisy asked the following question: "Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law? He said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole strength and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment; and the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets." (Matt. xxii. 35-40).

God demands not what is impossible, and His help is proportionate to the task or sacrifice He asks of us. The virtues and gifts infused into our souls in Baptism aid us along through life to attain our eternal destiny, but the most excellent of all the divine virtues in our struggles for salvation, is the virtue of charity; for,

at all moments of our lives it predisposes, prompts and inclines us and co-operates with us in doing all that God has commanded, and all that He desires of us.

From the way our Saviour inculcates the necessity of the love of God, and the intensity of that love He requires of us—for He teaches us what quality our love should have when He says: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole strength and with thy whole mind"—we necessarily infer that our good Lord will not be satisfied with the ordinary love we bestow on created things; those who like the Pharisees are able to understand and grasp the full meaning of God's law, should not shirk the obligation of learning what kind of love God has imposed upon us with so much emphasis. The love for God which He Himself had in view when He taught us to love the Lord with all the strength of our intellect and will, is a perfect love, one which will reconcile us to God even if we have been guilty of a grievous sin, provided we desire to have recourse to the Sacrament of Penance, when opportunity presents itself.

Perfect and Imperfect Love of God. The perfection of our love is determined not by its intensity, but by the motive or the reason for which we love God. Thus, the motive alone distinguishes a perfect from an imperfect love. Charity is perfect when we love God for His own sake, i. e., when we represent Him to our mind as infinitely good or infinitely perfect in all that is good, and, therefore, worthy of all our love, and when our reason determines our will to love a God so amiable. This motive can be understood by the most ignorant, if they are told to compare God with what is most lovable among the beautiful things of the created world around us; for God has made them all, and therefore must be more lovable than all created beauty or even conceivable beauty: His lovableness is without limit.

Besides this perfect love, which we should endeavor to have in all our devotions and good works, there is a love we call imperfect, because the infinite amiability of God, His justice, His holiness, etc., are not the motive of our love, but some other supernatural truth revealed to us, e. g., when we represent to us our God as a good Father Who loves all His children, or as our Creator and Redeemer, or as our ultimate end. There are hundreds of motives in which shine forth God's goodness, justice and mercy, and which are a sufficient motive for imperfect love, such as all the mysteries of our holy Religion, in which God's goodness and mercy are so eminently portrayed.

The effects produced in the soul by perfect and imperfect

love of God are indeed very different. Both loves are acceptable to God, but perfect love of God, or perfect charity, cannot exist together in the soul with mortal sin, and therefore, if the sinner in mortal sin elicits an act of perfect love, coupled with sorrow for his sins, in case he is conscious of any, all his sins, as to their guilt and the eternal punishment due to them are remitted; but an imperfect love of God, although also meritorious when elicited by one in the state of grace, cannot remit mortal sin without recourse to the Sacrament of Penance, or of Baptism if a person has never been baptized. Such a love, however, may obtain the grace of the Holy Ghost which will lead to his conversion. (Cf. Trent, Sess. 14, c. 4; and Sess. 6, c. 6, on Justification).

The love of preference is essential to a true and sincere love of God; and, therefore, we must love God more than ourselves, more than our material interest, our honor or reputation, more than our dearest friends, more than our father and mother, yea, more than our life: "He that loveth father and mother . . . . son and daughter more than Me," says our Lord, "is not worthy of Me." (Matt. x. 37). That love for God must surpass love for any creature, is again inculcated in these words of the Saviour: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." (Luke, xiv. 26).

The very fact that God is the object of our love, convinces us that everything that is not God, is as nothing compared to the infinitely perfect Being. All that is truly good and lovely, all that attracts admiration and all that is amiable, in the created world of beings, such as power, wisdom, holiness, majesty, beauty and wealth, etc., belongs to God in an infinite degree. He is all-wise, all-holy, almighty, all-good; He is absolute, omnipresent, eternal; He possesses all things, and it depends only on His free will to create thousands of worlds more beautiful than the one we inhabit. He is infinitely amiable; and how can we help loving God above all things, when all the beauty we can conceive, even of possible beings, is but a drop in the ocean of God's lovableness.

When we possess that perfect love for the infinite God, nothing prevents us from having other laudable motives for our love, such as the fact that God demands our love, that He is all-loving as well as all-lovable, and, therefore, repays our love with His friendship; and also because such love for God, if persevered in to the end, will bring us to eternal happiness. This expectation cannot be forbidden, nor can it diminish the perfection of our love; for the virtue of hope has its source in God's promise to give us eternal life, if we deserve it. Surely,

trust in God's goodness and promises must be acceptable to Him Who demands our filial and trustful love, and has taught us to pray :"Thy kingdom come!"

The love of God is perfectible in an indefinite degree. We can forever increase our love for God: viz., by desiring it earnestly, by humbly praying to obtain it, by meditating on God's infinite perfection, by loving or by frequent acts of love, by an ever increasing zeal in procuring God's honor and glory, by the frequent reception of the Sacraments, and by all those means that increase sanctifying grace in our souls; by denying ourselves or by destroying the last vestige of self-love within us, by practicing entire conformity to the will of God in all things, and finally, by copying our Model, Jesus Christ, Who, in His sacred humanity, has given us a most perfect example of submission to His eternal Father.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The word neighbor used in this commandment means in its strictest sense, any and every human being here on earth, who is called to eternal glory in heaven; therefore all people of whatever race, nationality or creed, known or unknown, good or bad, friends or enemies, must be considered as neighbors to everyone of us. In a more general sense, the word neighbor also includes all those who are sure of their eternal destiny, and in that sense, the souls in purgatory and the blessed in heaven are also our neighbors; only the devils and the damned in hell are excluded.

The love of neighbor is a strict precept, and although we may love in our neighbor, as coming from God, his natural endowments, such as his comeliness, his agreeable and obliging manner, his talents and learning, etc., we should rather see in him a soul created to the image and likeness of God and like us a child of God destined to eternal happiness. If he be a Christian and a Catholic, he has been clothed with baptismal innocence, and is in communion with us as a member of Holy Church; these and similar reasons, together with the divine precept, will teach us that we must love our neighbor as ourselves. The form and rule that should govern the love of neighbor, is the love we should have for ourselves; and therefore, its precept obliges every indi-

vidual to do to others what he may reasonably expect that others should do unto him. "All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them. For this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. vii. 12). This obligation clearly extends to all our thoughts, our desires, our words and actions, for we are not indifferent, but very sensitive, to what others think of and desire for us, and still less indifferent to what they say of or do to us.

Man lives not by himself alone, as an individual without intercourse with his fellow-men. He is by nature a social being, and as such, every single person shares the task to seek the temporal and spiritual welfare of society at large. Each one of us as a member of society must bear his share of the burdens, as we also reap the benefits of the services bestowed by others. If this is true in matters temporal, it applies also to spiritual things. We are bound to strive for the spiritual welfare of all our neighbors, and as we know by experience how example attracts, and what influence exterior things have on our mind and heart for good or evil, we owe our neighbor not only instruction, advice and correction in matters spiritual, but good example as well.

The means given above to increase the love of God in our soul, will also serve to increase in us the love of our neighbor; moreover, both loves are so intimately connected that they spring from a common source, viz., the virtue of charity, which is infused into our soul by Baptism and inclines us to love God and our neighbor for God's sake. St. John, who distinguished himself by a tender love for his Master and was therefore also especially loved by Him, cites the words of the Saviour, from which we learn that the love of neighbor is inseparable from the love of God. "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples if you have love for one another." (John xiii. 35). And he also reminds us in his first Epistle, that "if any man says, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar." Why does St. John so emphatically declare that he who pretends to love God and does not love his neighbor, is a liar? For no other reason than that he who loves God his Father, will love also the children whom the Father loves, i. e., all those He has created to His own image and likeness, all those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of His beloved Son Jesus, and all those whom the heavenly Father calls, as well as us, to the same eternal happiness.

Love of neighbor is not one of equality. The love of neighbor that is demanded of us is not one of absolute equality, but one of similarity and kind; and by this is understood that as we wish ourselves happiness or success, or desire to preserve our good name, likewise we ought to wish happiness to our fellow-man and preserve his reputation; if we do not wish that anyone should injure us in whatever we possess, we should not injure our neighbor's property, etc.; but where sacrifices are required on our part, as for instance in relieving the necessity of our neighbor, we are not expected to give all we have to relieve his want, nor to sacrifice a great portion of our fortune to help many people in an epidemic, an earthquake, etc., this would be unreasonable, and such a practice would cause many to become negligent in providing for the future. We should also distinguish between spiritual and temporal goods. In general we are in duty bound to prefer the spiritual good of our neighbor to our temporal advantage; and therefore if we know our neighbor to be in danger of losing his soul, in such an emergency and similar ones, we should be willing to undergo great hardships and make great temporal sacrifices in order to save him from an unhappy death.

305. Why do these two commandments of the love of God and of our neighbor contain the whole law of God?

These two commandments of the love of God and of our neighbor contain the whole law of God, because all the other commandments are given either to help us to keep these two, or to direct us how to shun what is opposed to them.

We learn from our Savior Himself that the two commandments of the love of God and of our neighbor contain the whole law of God; for after having inculcated the two commandments, He added: "On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets"

(Matt. xxii. 40), i. e., all the precepts of the law and of the prophets are founded on these two commandments. They may be considered as the root and trunk of a tree, from which all the branches take their life and their strength, and thus are the source of all that the other commandments prescribe and the prophets have taught. We learn from St. Augustine that the Decalogue was written by God on two tables of stone; on one of which were carved the three commandments of the love of God, and on the other, the seven commandments relating to the love of our neighbor. Even, if all the duties imposed by the theological and moral virtues are contained in the same two commandments, for the precepts of faith, hope, charity and religion are implicitly taught in the commandment of the love of God, and those of justice, fortitude, truth, fidelity, friendship, constancy, mercy, gratitude, etc., are easily deduced from the love of our neighbor. Therefore we should in all our actions have always before our mind the love of God and of our neighbor, practice what is in conformity with these two commandments, and shun what is opposed to them.

306. What are the Commandments of God?

The Commandments of God are these ten:

1. I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them or serve them.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.

8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

The constant tradition of the Church, as well as that of the Jews, teaches us that the commandments proclaimed by God on Mount Sinai are ten. Moses (Deut. iv. 13) calls them the ten words, hence the name Decalogue from "deca" ten and "logos" word; but all do not agree in the division of the Decalogue. Protestants, by dividing the first commandment into two, have found by separating "the making of images" from the rest: "Thou shalt not adore them or serve them," a welcome ground, a strong argument, as they think, against the use of images, as practiced in the Catholic Church. But there seems to be no valid reason for setting aside the verdict of centuries that preceded them. The logical chain of ideas permits no such division. Accepting the universal opinion that, "I am the Lord thy God, Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," is an introduction to emphasize that He, Who is the Lord of His people, and their God, and has miraculously delivered them from the slavery of Egypt, is now addressing the chosen people, we shall find three complex notions in the first commandment: viz., "Thou shalt not have strange gods before me," i. e., in My sight; Thou shalt not make to thyself images or graven things; Thou shalt not adore them or serve them. The three sentences contain three distinct prohibitions, and therefore three commandments or rather only one, for in the latter case, the last two prohibitions are explanatory of the first. The logical connection between the three complex notions is expressed as follows: Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me, i. e., thou shalt not make any representation of anything that exists, by drawing, painting, carving, and worship or serve them, i. e., with a view to adoring them. That this is the only reasonable, as well as the true explanation, is evident

from the single sanction which follows the prohibition. As there is also but one sanction for each of the three following commandments—as is clearly shown in Deut. v. 6-21, where the law is again repeated—this analogy is proof that the three prohibitions in the first commandment should not be separated, for otherwise at least one of the prohibitions would be left without sanction.

By making two commandments of the first, the Protestants were obliged to combine the last two, the ninth and tenth, into one, as if coveting a neighbor's wife were the same thing as coveting his goods. Do they forget that in His Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught that he that covets his neighbor's wife commits adultery in his heart? (Matt. v. 33). And is it not equally true that he who covets his neighbor's goods commits theft in his heart? Theft and adultery are different species of sin and forbidden by two different commandments, the sixth and seventh; consequently the last two commandments should not be combined into one.

307. Who gave the Ten Commandments?

God Himself gave the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai, and Christ our Lord confirmed them.

It is God Who gave the Ten Commandments, for He begins by saying: "I am the Lord thy God"; but St. Paul tells us the angels proclaimed the Ten Commandments. (Gal. iii. 19). Is there any contradiction in this? None whatever: if the angels proclaimed the law, as seems evident from St. Paul's Epistle just quoted, they did so in the name of God, as a prime minister issues decrees in the name of his sovereign. God can communicate directly, without intermediary, with His children on earth. But the angels were created, not only to adore God, but also to serve Him. In God there is order, and if He created several choirs of angels with different duties attached to each office, we should concede what St. Paul teaches us, especially so, if we bear in mind that the greatest announcement ever made by God to His children on earth, was brought by the Angel Gabriel,

when he announced to the Blessed Virgin the Incarnation of the Son of God.

The circumstances which attended the promulgation of the law on Mount Sinai are well apt to inspire us with a sense of holy fear, as well as to convince us of the great importance of the Decalogue.

The strict limits of approach to Mount Sinai, forbidden under pain of death to all the people, except Moses and Aaron; thunder and lightning, whilst smoke and fire were issuing from the top of the mountain; the sound of many trumpets proceeding from the clouds above; the strict command to wash their garments and to abstain from conjugal intercourse as a preparation for the proclamation of the law, were well calculated to strike terror into the hearts of the Jewish people, and to fill them with the deepest conviction of the great majesty of God, and of the holiness and sanctity of the law.

Although the Decalogue was announced by Moses to the people who were at the foot of Sinai, God wrote it also on two tables of stone, called the Tables of the Testimony. (Deut. v. 22). We learn from Holy Writ, that these tables of stone were thereafter deposited in the Ark of the Covenant.

St. Augustine is our authority for calling the Decalogue an epitome of the entire law of God, which is reducible to two commandments, that of the love of God and of our neighbor, on which, we have seen, "dependeth the whole law and the prophets."

LESSON THE THIRTIETH

ON THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

308. What is the First Commandment?

The First Commandment is: I am the Lord thy God; Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

The introduction: "I am the Lord thy God, etc.," claims our attention first; for why does God not begin with such words as these: I am the Lord thy God Who created thee and preserved thee, Who has made the earth and the heavens for thy use and comfort and has destined thee to eternal happiness? Why appeal to the Israelites as the Lord God Who has brought them out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage? Who are those people God appeals to? By nature they were carnal, on

whom lofty motives would make but slight impressions. Their deliverance from the slavery of Egypt was still fresh in their memory, and the extraordinary events and miracles that accompanied it were, more than any other consideration, calculated to awaken in them a sense of gratitude, respect and obedience, whilst the stupendous wonders God wrought at the time of the proclamation of the law filled them with fear and awe.

A short sketch of the history of those people will be useful here for a full understanding of that mysterious economy by which Providence watched over them. Amongst the nations of the earth God chose one that descended from Abraham. It was God's will that Abraham should be a stranger in the land of Canaan, the possession of which was promised to his posterity; and although for more than forty years he and his descendants were wanderers, before they obtained possession of the land, God did not withdraw from them His protecting care. They passed from nation to nation and from kingdom to kingdom; He suffered no man to hurt them, and He reproved kings for their sake. Before they went down into Egypt, He sent before them Joseph, through whose prudence they and the people of Egypt were rescued from famine; and such was His paternal kindness for them, that, although opposed by the power of Pharoah who sought their destruction, they increased in an extraordinary manner, and when severely harassed and cruelly treated as slaves, He raised up Moses as a leader to conduct them from bondage with a strong hand.

These descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were God's people by predilection, and by them He wished to be known and worshipped, and He disdained not to be called their God. The happiness of those people should have excited a holy emulation among other nations and brought them likewise to the worship of the true God. But, if in this the designs of divine Providence were not fully accomplished, the belief in the One God and the faith in a Redeemer to come were constantly kept before the eyes of the chosen people, and by the frequent warnings of the prophets as well as by dire punishments, the way was prepared for the coming of the Messiah, in whom all nations should be blessed. (Cf. R. C.)

If the words, "Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of bondage," were calculated to inspire the Jews with a holy fear and love of God, Christians, more than they, owe everlasting gratitude to God for their deliverance from the slavery of Satan, a far

more degrading bondage; for how could the slavery of Egypt be compared to the slavery under which we should now groan, i. e., the slavery of Satan, with all the miseries that would accompany it, had we not been redeemed by the precious blood of the Son of God. "We have been liberated not from the bondage of Egypt, but from the power of darkness and are translated into the kingdom of His beloved Son." (1 Cor. i. 13).

Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. This prohibition is equivalent to saying: Thou shalt worship Me, the true God alone, and no other god. We find then, in the words referred to, two precepts, one of command or mandatory, and one of prohibition or prohibitory; and this must be kept in mind in all the prohibitory commands of the Decalogue. Hence the trite saying: "They command what they prohibit, and prohibit what they command," i. e., the mandatory commandments forbid what is opposed to them and the prohibitory commandments command the opposite of the prohibition. Besides the first commandment, all the others but two, the third and fourth, are also prohibitory. The nature of the different commandments makes it imperative for the sake of convenience and brevity, that most of them should be expressed in the prohibitory form; whilst the third and fourth commandments can be more easily expressed in the short mandatory form; for "Keep holy the Sabbath Day," and "Honor thy father and thy mother," are more briefly expressed in the mandatory form than by enumerating the long list of prohibitions opposed to those commandments.

We will learn in the next five numbers how we should adore and serve God.

309. How does the first commandment help us to keep the great commandment of the love of God?

The first commandment helps us to keep the great commandment of the love of God because it commands us to love God alone.

The first three commandments relate to our duties to God, and in the first commandment, the next two are implicitly contained; for the second commandment relates principally to the service of God in speech, and the third commandment to a particular manner of worshipping God exteriorly; therefore the first three commandments may be called the three commandments of the love of God, and they, as has been explained before, occupied one of the two tables of stone, on which the Ten Commandments were engraved when God handed them to Moses.

By forbidding the adoration of dumb idols, God forbade the most prevalent, wicked and degrading worship then existing among all the nations of the world; but, since the preamble begins with the words: "I am the Lord thy God," the prohibition: "Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me," clearly intimates that God implicitly imposes upon us the natural obligation of adoring and serving Him alone. Our conscience dictates to us, and sound reason convinces us, that the Author of our being and our Preserver has a right to our services; we hold all from Him and from His will. All that we are, and all that we have is due to His bounty: He can deprive us of it all in one instant. We are thus entirely dependent on God's goodness. A simple recognition of what we are and what God is to us, ought to engender in our souls, not only interior sentiments of adoration, but likewise devotedness to His service manifested by exterior worship. If our reason is powerful enough to dictate to us interior and exterior recognition of our dependence on the God of the universe, so that the savage in the remotest wilderness cannot escape the warnings of conscience, what should be the sentiments towards the Divine Majesty, of a Christian, who has been taught that his God is not only his Creator, but also his Redeemer, Who calls him to an eternal reward in the participation of God's nature. When we consider what God is in Himself, and what He is to us in the natural and supernatural order, how vile all else seems to us that is not God, or does not tend to God. These simple truths convince any intelligent and right-minded man that God alone should be adored and He alone should be served.

310. How do we adore God?

We adore God by faith, hope and charity, by prayer and sacrifice.

By the word "adore" used in the Decalogue and in other parts of Holy Scripture, is meant what we now generally convey by the word "worship," i. e., to pay due honor to God. Although the words "adoration" and "worship" are synonymous, the custom has now prevailed to express by the word "adoration" a humble and silent prayer, by which we recognize God's infinite perfections and our absolute dependence on Him for all that we are and all that we have; and by the word "worship," if true and not false worship, is usually understood, all interior and exterior homage, honor and glory, respect, reverence and veneration rendered to the infinite majesty of God.

What is understood by worshipping God by faith, hope and charity? There can be no question here of the virtues of the same name, which are infused in us by Baptism, together with sanctifying grace, for they are pure gifts of God, which no effort of ours can merit. God cannot be honored by us except by an act of our free-will. Faith, hope and charity, of which there is question here, are acts of those infused virtues, when we co-operate freely and willingly with the inclination that comes to us, by the mysterious and supernatural help of the three theological virtues.

When we elicit an act of faith, accepting as truth all that God has taught, we honor God's veracity, and the virtue of faith inclines us to it; when we trust that God will give us eternal life and the means to obtain it, we honor God's fidelity in His promises, and it is the virtue of hope that has moved the soul to it: when we elicit an act of the love of God, esteeming Him above all things, we worship God by that preference we have for Him over all things created, and the virtue of charity has moved us to do so. Even when we love our neighbor for God's sake, we honor God by submitting our will to His; for it is His will that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. God is then truly worshipped by faith, hope and charity, as St. Augustine and the Roman Catechism teach us, and our natural reason confirms it. Is there any obligation on our part to make acts of faith, hope and charity? It is nowhere mentioned that we should, except when those virtues are

indispensable to perform some obligation, in which those acts are implicitly required, e. g., when Paschal Communion is to be received, an implicit act of faith must necessarily accompany the reception of the Sacrament. Likewise when we have to receive the Sacrament of Penance, we must have implicit trust that God will forgive the penitent sinner; and when we are assailed by violent temptations to commit mortal sin, our resistance cannot be conceived without at least an implicit act of love. Besides, we are bound to make explicit acts of the theological virtues several times in our lives, because it would be dishonoring God, never to express in thought or word that we believe what He has revealed, that we hope and trust in His promises, and that we esteem and love Him above all things. Again, we should urge those under our charge, and urge ourselves, to make frequent acts of the divine virtues, not only because by them we reverence God in a special manner, but also because the greater our faith, hope and charity, the stronger and safer we are against all temptations, and the greater merit we acquire by our good works. How do we increase our faith but by believing and accepting upon the authority of God all that He has revealed; our hope, but by hoping what God has promised and by putting our whole trust in Him; and our love, but by loving God in all things for the love of God. Therefore the practice of saying morning and evening the acts of faith, hope and charity should never be neglected for a single day, although there is no strict obligation to make the acts daily. Besides, faith, hope and charity are at least indirectly and implicitly commanded by this first commandment, which directly imposes upon us the virtue of religion, a moral virtue, inferior to the three theological virtues, but surpassing all other moral virtues, for by it we are inclined to render due worship to God as the Source of all good. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 81, a. 5, 6).

We can easily understand how the virtue of religion is inferior to the theological virtues which come from God and

have God for their object and directly tend to God, as is evident when we remember in what the three virtues consist; whilst the virtue of religion has immediately for object the internal and external acts that comprise the homage due to the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. Still, from the fact that internal and external acts of homage and reverence have God for their object, and give Him greater glory than the virtues of humility, obedience, patience, etc., the virtue of religion excels all moral virtues. (Cf. Introduction to Tenth Lesson—On Virtues).

The principal acts of the virtue of religion are: divine worship, prayer and sacrifice, and to these may be added: lawful oaths, adjurations by proper authority and for just causes, vows and divine praises. Even offerings of the people for the upkeep of divine worship are acts of the virtue of religion. All these acts are fully explained in their proper places: prayer, and divine praises in No. 296, sq.; sacrifice (see Mass), oaths, adjurations and vows are explained in the lesson on the second commandment; and as to divine worship we will add a further explanation in the following lesson which treats of the worship due to God and to His saints.

311. How may the first commandment be broken?

The first commandment may be broken by giving to a creature the honor which belongs to God alone; by false worship; and by attributing to a creature a perfection which belongs to God alone.

The first commandment forbids expressly idolatry, which gives to creatures the honor which belongs to God alone, and it forbids also false worship.

Since we have concluded with St. Augustine that by the first commandment we are bound to worship God by faith, hope and charity, all the vices opposed to these theological virtues are necessarily forbidden by the same commandment. The sins committed against faith and hope will be considered hereafter in this same lesson, and the virtue of charity has been explained in Nos. 304-305; while the whole Decalogue, in so far as the commandments are affirmative, tends to the love of God, for "He that loves Me, keeps My commandments," says Our Lord.

The first commandment forbids likewise the vices opposed to the virtue of religion, which is clearly im-

posed by the same commandment, and we can sin against religion by defect and by excess.

The vices opposed to the virtue of religion by excess, i. e., by giving to a creature the honor due to God or by attributing to a creature some perfection belonging to God alone, are as follows: "idolatry, superstition, divination, sacrilege, witchcraft, vain observance, magic, necromancy, belief in dreams, etc. The sins opposed to religion by defect are: irreligion, false worship of the true God and also blasphemy and perjury of which there will be question in the second commandment. There are also several other species of false worship; viz., temptation of God, sacrilege and simony.

Irreligion, or want of religion, comprises principally the following vices: indifferentism, agnosticism, naturalism, rationalism, modernism, liberalism, socialism, etc.

Religions that sin by false worship given to the true God are:

(a) Judaism once the true religion, has now become false, because it refuses to accept the Messiah or Saviour, for Whom Judaism was the preparation. Among the Jews may be counted the Samaritans, who separated from them under King Roboam, son of Solomon, and were first called Israelites, but after the Assyrian conquest and the subsequent captivity, they were called Samaritans.

(b) Mohammedanism is false because it teaches a new revelation made to Mohammed, as well as the practice of circumcision and polygamy, which it borrowed from the Jews with other observances of the Mosaic Law. The necessity of a Redeemer is not admitted by the followers of Mohammed.

(c) Schism is a false worship, because schismatics worship the true God with a true worship, but outside the fold of the Church established by the Saviour.

(d) Heresy must also be branded as false worship, because heretics worship outside the fold, and their worship and faith are opposed to the teachings of Christ and of His Church.

(e) Modernists and liberalists in religion belong to the same class, as they hold doctrines condemned by the Church, principally in the syllabus of Pope Pius IX, and in a decree against Modernism by Pope Pius X, and, therefore, they are heretics.

Note. Socialism, as a false worship, is considered in an appendix.

(f) Contempt of Sacred Things. Catholics are often guilty of contempt, when they think or speak with disrespect of holy things or of the practices of Holy Church, of devotions approved by the Church and especially of the Sacraments and of

the ceremonies that accompany them. Levity may sometimes excuse them from mortal sin, when they ridicule devout persons or practices, but when there is joined to ridicule real contempt of holy things as such, like the Mass and the Sacraments, such contempt can never be excused from mortal sin.

(g) Temptation of God. This sin is defined by St. Thomas (II. 2, q. 97, a. 1) as an attempt to experiment whether God knows or wills or can do what is proposed to or asked of Him, and then it is explicit temptation. He tempts God implicitly, who, without necessity, exposes himself to danger, in order to try if God will liberate him from it. We see an instance of the first, or of explicit temptation, when the Pharisees tempted our Lord by trying to ensnare Him in His answers; and of implicit temptation we see examples in those who expose themselves to the proximate occasion of sin and hope that God will give them the grace to keep pure and innocent.

Sacrilege. Sacrilege, according to St. Thomas (II. 2, q. 99, a. 1, 2, 3), is a violation of a sacred thing as such. Irreverence in church, inattention at Mass, or whispering or laughing during service, are not sacrileges, unless done through contempt of God or of sacred things. As there are sacred places, persons and things, there are different species of sacrilege. By sacred places are meant all places dedicated to God, such as chapels, churches, and solemnly blessed cemeteries; and any great irreverence, such as destroying or injuring them wantonly, because they are consecrated places, or committing therein exterior acts of immorality, murder or wilfully spilling therein human blood, or theft of things dedicated to God's service or of things left in a church, are sacrileges. By sacred persons we understand those in in sacred Orders, also Religious of both sexes, who have made perpetual vows; and the violation of such persons, or the act of bringing them or causing them to be brought before civil tribunals, or the act of striking them with criminal intent, is a sacrilege and a heinous crime. By sacred things we understand the Sacraments and sacred vessels, relics of the holy Cross, sacred images and statues of the saints, holy water, etc. To treat or handle them with wilful irreverence is always a great sin of sacrilege; but the most abominable and greatest

of sacrileges is the unworthy reception of the Sacraments. St. Thomas has this to say on the subject: "It is a more grievous sin of sacrilege to commit a sin against a sacred person than against a sacred place, but in both species there are different grades according to the difference of the holiness existing in persons or in sacred places. The same may be said of the third species of sacrilege, the one committed against sacred things; for as there are different classes of sacred things, there are different grades of sins. Among all of them the Sacraments hold the highest place, because by them man is sanctified; and among the Sacraments the Holy Eucharist is the most excellent, because it contains Christ Himself. Therefore, a sacrilege against this Sacrament is the most grievous sin of all. After the Sacraments, the sacred vessels for the administration of the Sacraments hold the second place, and last come sacred images and relics of saints, by which in a manner the very persons of the saints are honored or dishonored." (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 99, a. 3).

Simony. The word simony comes from Simon, the Magician, of whom it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, that he offered money to the Apostles to buy their spiritual power, when he said: "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I shall lay my hands he may receive the Holy Ghost." (Acts, viii. 18, sq.)

Simony, says St. Thomas (II. 2, q. 100, a. 1), is a deliberate intention to buy or sell something spiritual or annexed to something spiritual. By something spiritual is meant anything that may tend to our salvation, such as indulgences, gifts of the Holy Ghost, Sacraments, Masses, blessed beads and medals, relics of the holy Cross or of the saints, dispensations granted by the Church for grave reasons, catechetical instructions, sermons, ecclesiastical benefices, etc. By something annexed to spiritual things, we understand that which is indispensable to or accompanies what is in itself spiritual: such as sacred vessels and vestments necessary

for the Mass or Sacraments, the labor that cannot be separated from the Mass, and from the administration of the Sacraments or from the teaching of Christian doctrine, etc.

From this we understand that he who buys, as well as he who sells for money or contracts for any of the above spiritual things, commits simony, and can hardly be excused from mortal sin, except through ignorance; because what is spiritual so far exceeds what is temporal, that nothing temporal can equal in value the least spiritual good. Although to buy anything in itself sacred, is always sinful, money given for labor performed in religious functions is not necessarily buying or selling anything sacred: for we should distinguish between price and stipend: a stipend is in the nature of a contribution or a salary. Among the Romans, the salary of a military man for his services and the usual taxes paid to the government were called stipends. Among us it means a contribution given either for the support of the priest or for the maintenance or government of the Church. Such a contribution towards the support of those engaged in the administration of spiritual things differs totally from a price paid for a sacred thing, which properly constitutes simony. The same thing may be said of all dispensations granted for marriages, which are issued from the chancery offices; for the fee, provided the ordinary of the diocese approve of it, is necessary to defray the expenses of the chancery office and comes under the name of stipend. St. Paul teaches what our sound judgment also approves, when he says: "Who serveth as a soldier at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth the flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock? . . . . If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a greater matter if we reap your carnal things? . . . . Know you not that they who work in a holy place eat the things that are of the holy place; and they that serve the altar, partake with the altar?" (1 Cor. ix. 7, sq.)

We conclude from the principles laid down, the following:

1. It is not simony to accept freely offered gifts on the occasion of the administration of the Sacraments, nor is it simony to ask the usual stipend for Masses, etc., as the Church allows it as a means of support for the priest as well as for the necessary expenses of the Church and for charitable purposes.

2. It is simony to sell an object for a greater price, on account of the blessing or consecration attached to it; e. g., to sell beads or rosaries above their material value, simply because they are indulgenced; but it would not be simony to sell a

rosary already blessed, at its material worth, though the indulgences are lost by so doing. It is also simony to sell cases and crosses with their relics, if the crosses or cases containing the relics, are of less value than the price paid or bargained for them.

3. It is not simony to receive a salary for the general work done in the ministry, nor to charge for a High Mass more than is usually offered as a stipend for a Low Mass, on account of the expenses and of the more than ordinary labor connected with it, and also on account of the lateness of the hour.

4. Although it would be sinful and simoniacal to give or receive Ordination, or to admit Religious to make their vows, and to offer or demand a valuable consideration for either, it would not be simony to charge for board, tuition and care of students, of postulants, or novices, whilst they are preparing for Ordination or for their entrance into a religious community; nor would it be simony to ask a dowry for the reception of postulants or novices in any religious order, for such dowries form a fund for all future necessities or eventualities of the postulant, or novice, or of the community.

In all such and similar cases the customs of the particular locality and the statutes of each diocese must be scrupulously followed. The Church, always vigilant in such matters, will never allow any custom to prevail that may savor of simony.

Superstition. Superstition is twofold: it consists in attributing divine worship to whom it is not due, or in the manner it is not due.

A. Imperfect idolatry. Perfect idolatry, or fetichism, is now practiced only among the uncivilized heathens, unless we consider the worship of ancestors among the Chinese or the worship of the emperor among some Japanese as a species of idolatry; but imperfect idolatry is often more wicked than the preceding. It is found in those who for gain or hatred of God, worship the evil spirit or enter into contract with him; if such a worship exist anywhere, which is doubtful, it is the abomination of abominations.

B. Superstition is committed by rendering to a creature the honor due to God, in order to learn some secret or obtain some help. It is called divination, if recourse is had to evil spirits for knowledge of the future. To expect success or good luck from a creature to which one attributes supernatural or preternatural power, would be what is called vain observance, e. g., to place a horseshoe over an entrance. It is also superstition if one expects some wonderful effect from inadequate causes, and then it is called magic or black art, sorcery, witchcraft, necromancy, etc. All these are sins against religion, and considered

in themselves or in their nature, they are grievous sins; but they may become venial through ignorance or simplicity. A practice of this kind, indeed, may be free from any sin, when it is done in jest, as when fortunes are told with cards. Of the vices of superstition we will speak more at length in the next number.

C. It is also superstitious to worship God in a manner which is not due, e. g., if one should think more of a Mass said by one priest than by another, or if one take part in a chain of prayers by copying them and forwarding them to others with a view to make an endless chain, and then judge that such prayers are more meritorious on account of the chain. It is likewise superstition to think that scapulars and blessed crosses will surely preserve the person from this or that evil, e. g., from sudden death. Such superstitions do not exceed venial guilt, unless confidence is placed in the thing itself, e. g., if one should collect herbs in a full moon, and arrange them in the form of a cross and expect by wearing it, freedom from sickness, etc. On the other hand it is perfectly lawful to wear an Agnus Dei, scapulars, blessed medals, crucifix, etc., provided they are used according to the intention and spirit of the Church: viz., to honor thereby the Blessed Virgin, the angels and the saints, or to place oneself under their protection.

D. Divination as a vice opposed to religion, needs special consideration. St. Thomas defines it as a searching into occult things by the aid of the devil. It is called express or explicit divination, if one desires by words or signs the co-operation of evil spirits. Of this abominable sin those are guilty who follow divination as a business, to extort money from their deluded dupes, whether the co-operation of the devil be real or only desired; and they come under the name of soothsayers, fortune tellers, seers or seeresses, clairvoyants, mediums, dream-interpreters, palmists, etc. If palmists rely only on natural causes, which are supposed to produce certain lines in the hands, from which the character of the person is deduced, such reading, as they call it, is not objectionable, provided it does not extend to future events depending on the free-will of God or of man.

Divination is tacit or implicit, when one does not desire the aid of the evil spirit, but uses means to arrive at the knowledge of occult things by means entirely disproportionate thereto. Under that name come several species of divination and other vain observances, which will be considered in the next question.

312. Do those who make use of spells and charms, or who believe in dreams, in mediums, spiritists, fortune-tellers, and the like sin against the first commandment?

Those who make use of spells and charms or who believe in dreams, in mediums, spiritists, fortune-tellers and the like sin against the first commandment, because they attribute to creatures perfections which belong to God alone.

Spells and charms are words or signs or both combined, or things used or worn to which a certain power is attributed which they do not naturally possess. Their use is superstitious, unless done in jest, and constitutes a grievous offense; for it falls under the kind of superstition, called divination. If some occult knowledge or some other extraordinary effect is expected, which surpasses or seemingly surpasses the effects of the natural order, the following undeniable points must be borne in mind:

1. Evil spirits cannot work real miracles, nor can they prophesy future events which cannot be known by natural means.

2. As the evil spirits thoroughly understand all the laws of nature, they can, unless restrained by God, do great wonders, which to us would appear miraculous, but which in reality are only illusions; such were the wonders wrought by the magicians of Egypt to minimize the favorable impressions made upon Paraoh by the real miracles performed by Moses.

3. The evil spirits know many natural effects of laws unknown to us, and also things happening in distant lands, and God may allow them to communicate their knowledge to their dupes.

4. Neither the all-holy God, nor His angels will satisfy the curiosity of those who resort to means, unworthy of God, in order that they may acquire knowledge of future events or of events happening in distant parts of the world.

From the foregoing we deduce these two practicable conclusions, not to be forgotten when there is question of the lawfulness of investigating things, unknown to us, by other than natural means:

1. It is never allowed to employ means which of their nature are inadequate to obtain the knowledge of occult things, nor is it lawful to procure results of a supernatural nature, no matter what the means may be; but this does not apply to holy things sought or procured in accordance with the teachings of Christ and the practices of the Church.

2. For good and honest reasons one is allowed to use means, which, after due consideration, are doubtfully adequate to arrive at or procure extraordinary knowledge, or to procure wonderful events which in themselves are not of a supernatural nature; provided the practitioner and his abettors make a formal protest that they renounce and disclaim all co-operation of the devil; and provided that the practices resorted to be not prohibited by civil or ecclesiastical authority. The reason of the former proviso is self-evident, and that of the latter is easily understood, if we consider that the means employed, although not superstitious, may nevertheless be dangerous to the morals of those that participate in the experiment.

Who believe in dreams. To believe in dreams or to conjecture from dreams, as surely to happen, future events which depend on the free-will of God or man, or are simply matters of chance, is undoubtedly sinful; because a power is thereby attributed to dreams which they have not, unless the dreams be accompanied by circumstances which prove that they are God's work: of this latter kind was the dream of St. Joseph, when he was ordered by the angel to flee into Egypt with the Child Jesus and His Mother. One who believes in dreams to such an extent that he usually shapes his actions in accordance with them, can hardly be considered free from mortal sin.

Dreams come from natural causes, for it is well known that phlegmatic people often dream of water, drowning, swimming, etc.; choleric people dream of fire, losses, fights or murders; melancholic people dream of darkness, of monsters, and of fearful things exploding in the air, or of funerals, dead bodies, tombs, etc.; those of a sanguine temperament, light in weight and quick in their movements, usually dream of flying or of fast running or driving, etc.

Fortune-tellers. Fortune-tellers are a species of diviners, and this divination is tacit or implicit, if the means employed are disproportionate to the knowledge to be attained, e. g., if anyone wishes to know future events, fortuitous in their nature, or such as depend on the free-will of God or of man, or events in distant lands. Those guilty of any such practice, sin grievously. But fortune-tellers in general are mere deceivers and imposters, and those who consult them are their dupes. Yet as Holy Writ calls it an abomination to consult them, we must conclude that it is a mortal sin seriously to have recourse to them for advice; for who can say whether the fortune-teller believes in his own occult power or is only a deceiver? (Cf. Deut. xviii. 10-13; Acts, viii. 10, 11; and 2 Thes. ii. 2-9).

Animal magnetism, or mesmerism, hypnotism, turning or rapping tables, planchettes or ouija-boards, spiritism and mediums.

Mesmerism or animal magnetism consists in procuring a condition in which magnetized persons lose the use of their senses, but, by intuition of the mind, see many things they otherwise could not know. They recover the use of their senses at the command of the magnetizer.

Hypnotism is very similar to mesmerism, but instead of a magnetizer who produces that state, hypnotism is produced by personal action, i. e., by concentration of the mind on a particular thought or of the sight on a fixed object, with a previous understanding with a second person, who will dominate the former's will, whilst deprived of his senses. Hypnotized persons become in the end forced subjects to all the desires, wishes and commands of the operator. Of the two, mesmerism can be more easily tolerated, if there be a just cause, e. g., to ascertain the malady of the mesmerized person; but both are fraught with the greatest danger to morality and public decency, and if resorted to in order to acquire a knowledge of hidden things, surpassing the natural powers of the intellect, they imply an implicit or tacit contract with the evil one; and therefore they prove to be an abominable sin, a criminal intent against the Divine Majesty, pernicious to all the faculties of the soul and even ruinous, if often attempted, to the health of the body.

Planchettes or ouija boards and rapping-tables to answer questions, can never be seriously resorted to, as

they clearly fall under the vice of divination, opposed to the virtue of religion. It is even difficult to see how even simple curiosity or levity can excuse from mortal sin anyone who attempts experiments with either of them.

Spiritism. Spiritism, or spiritualism as it is sometimes wrongly called, is another species of divination, as it attempts a communication with the spirits of dead persons. The intercourse is sought in order that the spirits of the dead may reveal hidden truths about themselves and others in the spirit world. Sometimes the adherents of spiritism see wonderful things, such as table-rapping, chairs flying in the air in the semi-darkness, or melodious music is played by the spirits, and as suddenly the enrapturing music changed into a noisome, boisterous pandemonium. Spiritism seldom exceeds the illusions of a great punchinello or puppet show; but, if its adherents believe in an intercourse with the spirits of the dead, which, if there be any reality in them, cannot be other than evil spirits, it must be considered a grievous offense to assist at a spiritist meeting.

Mediums pretended or real are go-betweens, i. e., they are considered proper subjects, best adapted to communicate with the spirit world. Sometimes they take the place of hypnotized persons, and a few selected individuals previously chosen determine the questions to be asked.

Spiritism has now become an abominable indefinite religion, and under no condition can a Catholic assist at spiritualistic meetings; for this would be nothing less than to take part in a forbidden cult or worship, and secondly, because spiritists or spiritualists, implicitly at least, desire or attempt intercourse with the spirits of departed souls or with evil spirits; the latter communication would be express divination, and therefore impious and blasphemous; and the former is superstitious and contrary to the teachings of the Church on the communion of saints, and naturally leads to spirit-worship.

"Christian Science," or faith-cure, by rejecting the natural and scientific means to cure man's infirmities, resorts to vain observances and, therefore, it is a species of superstition; and as "Christian Science" is known to undermine religion, it is akin to spiritualism and is prohibited in its alleged double form, as a science and as a religion.

Divining-rods. A divining-rod is a forked hazel twig of which the two branches are supposed to move towards each other when water or mineral veins are encountered directly beneath, below the surface of the earth. In most parts of America, a simple willow twig is used, and is lightly held by both hands at both extremities of the twig. The twig is sup-

posed to bend downward at the center, when a water- or mineral -vein looked for is found. Well-diggers and borers, who practice this kind of divination, are called water-witches; and the experiment may be allowed if the practitioner seeks only natural effects, i. e., if he believes that the proximity of the water will attract the twig and bend it. Usually, it is best not to oppose vain observances like these.

As for the use of horseshoes, supposed to bring luck, when suspended over the doors of houses or at the gates or entrances to gardens and other premises, if it is believed in and done seriously, it would undoubtedly constitute a grievous offense against the first commandment; for what greater power can there be in iron when made in the form of a horseshoe than in the form of a circle, triangle or any other form?

Magic. We must distinguish magic, or the attempt to do wondrous and strange things by express or tacit understanding with the evil one, from prestidigitation or slight of hand performances. The latter are very innocent amusements, and are, as their name implies, effected by quick movements, artificial manipulations and other contrivances, dexterously used and intended to baffle and elude the sight of the beholder.

Magic consists in doing unusual, wondrous things. If wonderful effects are procured by natural, artificial means or contrivances, it is called white magic, and as the things done by it are purely illusions, such magic differs but little from prestidigitation, and is perfectly lawful. Example: it is wonderful to see a cold marble statue changed into a live man or woman, whose head is subsequently cut off with a sword, and who comes into life again, when an angel places back the head on his or her shoulders. This is but a natural result of the reflection and deflection of light through a thick glass and a mirror, placed at different angles to each other. But as to real magic, sorcery, witchcraft, black-art, etc., if their wonderful effects are produced with the help of evil spirits, they are not illusions: there have been such cases, as we learn from Holy Scripture. (Cf. Ex. vii. 8; Matt. iv. 1-11; Acts viii). All species of black-art, whether real or pretended, are abominable, offensive to the Divine Majesty and savoring of heresy.

313. Are sins against faith, hope and charity also sins against the first commandment?

Sins against faith, hope and charity are also sins against the first commandment.

The virtues of faith, hope and charity have been under consideration in No. 310-312. In the following

question we shall, after explaining the manner of worshipping God by these virtues, confine ourselves to the sins opposed to them.

The first commandment imposes an interior and exterior worship; and faith, hope and charity, if considered as acts of those virtues, belong properly to the interior worship due to God. How do we worship or reverence God interiorly by faith? By believing all He has revealed, for thereby we acknowledge His truthfulness and veracity, since true faith does not consist in believing things of which we are convinced by intuition, study or experienc, but in admitting as certain all things revealed by God. Faith, by which we recognize God's veracity, excludes all doubt as to the subject-matter of our belief, because faith rests solely on the authority of an all-wise, all-holy God. How do we worship God by hope? When we put our firm trust in God and in His promises, no matter how much these surpass our comprehension. With faith, we submit our intellect to God and also secondarily, our will; for in order to believe we must be willing to believe. But hope consists in the confidence that God is able and willing to do what He promises, i. e., that He is faithful in keeping His promises. Hope excludes all mistrust whether as to His willingness or His power of fulfilling His promises. Moreover, the virtue of hope inclines and prompts us to desire the good things God has promised, and in this we honor our Benefactor by submitting not only our judgment to Him, but also our will, by preferring His promised felicity to all earthly goods. Thus, as desire belongs to the will, and judgment to the intellect, we submit by hope both intellect and will to God.

If we honor God by faith and hope, we worship Him still more by charity; not precisely because it is in itself the greatest of all virtues and perfects them all, but mainly because by perfect charity, we offer to the Divine Majesty, in a more or less perfect manner, our whole being, all that we do and all that we are capable of,

reserving nothing for ourselves and parting with all what the present and future may bring us, with no other regret than that we are not able to give more.

To enumerate the things or ways, by which God can be worshipped by exterior acts corresponding to the three divine virtues, would be an endless task. These virtues form part of our prayers, our devotions, our meditations, and of the sublime Sacrifice. They accompany us in the Sacraments we receive, in the sacramentals we use, in the moral virtues we practice, etc. The saints, who understood so well how to unite exterior to interior worship of God, and whom we should strive to imitate, sought God in all things, desired nothing but God and loved God in all things. From the fact that we can honor God by interior and exterior acts of the three theological virtues, we must conclude that we ought to pay that honor and reverence to Him, at least in the measure He demands and in the manner He requires it; and, therefore, the worship prompted by those virtues is imposed on us by the first commandment. Hence, sins against faith, hope and charity are also sins against the first commandment.

314. How does a person sin against faith?

A person sins against faith, 1st, by not trying to know what God has taught; 2nd, by refusing to believe all that God has taught; 3rd, by neglecting to profess his belief in what God has taught.

In the first pages of this catechism, in the Introduction, we proved that Christ is the Son of God and that the Christian Doctrine preached by Him is divine, and in an appendix on Revelation at the end of this work, we shall show that God at divers times before Christ's coming on earth, also spoke to man; that He made known to him his origin and his destiny as well as the means to reach it. Therefore man must try to know what God has taught him, i. e., the truths He has revealed and the worship He demands of man, as well as all the other obligations He has imposed. No further explanation is here necessary than the introduction we borrow from one of St. Paul's Epistles: "God, Who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken

to us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the world, Who being the brightness of His glory and the figure of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, making purgation of sins, sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. i. 1-3).

Just before departing from this world, the Son of God sent His Apostles, previously chosen by Him, on the mission for which they were called, saying: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth; going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 18-20). St. Mark tells us that our Saviour added: "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark, xvi. 15, 16). What condemnation? Only the one, the meek Saviour, then the stern but just Judge, will pronounce at His coming on the last day: "Depart from Me ye cursed into everlasting fire."

Since the catechism treats in several questions of the virtue of faith, we should first learn the beauty and value of faith in order to understand the enormity of the sins which weaken or forfeit that excellent virtue. Belief in what God has taught constitutes true faith. First, the faith by which we accept on God's authority all He has made known to us, is a gift of God; for the first impression on the soul, i. e., an illumination of the mind as well as an inclination to believe, is the work of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of Truth enlightens the mind in the truths of revelation and moves the will to accept revealed truth, solely because it is revealed by God. Even those into whose soul the virtue of faith has been infused by Baptism, still need special enlightenment and aid from on high to make an act of faith. Man must co-operate with the grace of the Holy Ghost, but unaided he can neither begin to believe nor persevere in the faith. The reason is that faith in itself is supernatural, as it comes from God, has God for object, and tends towards our supernatural union with God in His kingdom. All this is above the natural powers of the soul. Secondly, faith is indispensable to us for salvation: for the supernatural life

of the soul, which makes us children of God and heirs of heaven, comes to us by faith, and "the just man liveth by faith." (Rom. i. 17). Without faith there is no good work meritorious of heaven; for at most all good works without it, would be but natural virtues unacceptable to God and undeserving of reward. "Without faith," says St. Paul, "it is impossible to please God." (Heb. xi. 6). With a strong and lively faith, the greatest sacrifices as well as the most heroic virtues are possible to man. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark ix. 22). What about charity, the greatest of all virtues? Is faith without charity of any avail? Listen; faith begets hope, and faith and hope produce charity, and this greatest of virtues perfects them both. God reveals Himself and His nature to us, and we believe; He promises Himself to us as our reward, we believe and trust in God's promise. Can we now help loving a God so good, a Father so bounteous? Charity or filial love, whilst we are sojourners in this valley of tears, rests both upon faith and hope; but charity, by discarding and rejecting whatever is unworthy of Christ's followers, by constantly tending towards perfection, by increasing daily in virtue and merit, and finally by seeking God in all things, causes faith to give place, as much as is possible in this life, to the contemplation of God, and hope to the possession of Him. Thus we must understand the saying of St. Paul: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by charity." (Gal. v. 6). Thirdly, faith is a light that shows the road in all the intellectual operations of the mind, and this is true not only of things supernatural, but even of all knowledge which we can attain by the natural faculties of our rational being. How feeble, how weak, how subject to error are the reasonings of the mind, unaided by the light of faith! To be convinced of this we have only to review the absurdities into which even great philosophers have fallen. What one thought he proved as an undeniable certainty, another has proven it false. Faith guides us with a strong light along the way and shows the danger of deviating from the path it lights up for us. Both reason and faith come from God, but reason is weak and often gropes in darkness; let the kindly light of faith guide the searcher after truth, and he is safe from the many abysses of monstrous errors into which learned men have often fallen. Faith cannot err, for it relies not on the feeble mind in search of truth: it accepts humbly what an all-wise and all holy God has taught and an infallible Church proposes to the belief of us all. Fourthly, faith alone can teach us the great problems of life. What am I? What is my origin? Why am I here on earth? Is He that made me also my Preserver? Does He communicate with man? Who

is He and what is His nature? What service, if any, does He demand of me. Is there any sanction to His laws, a reward for the good and a punishment for evil-doers? In what does the sanction consist? These and many other important questions, which reason cannot answer, faith has infallibly solved for us. Fifthly, what consolations and joy a lively faith brings to the heart! The trials and tribulations of this life are many and often severe, but the Christian is taught by his faith, that if they are borne with patience, they will increase his merits and his reward. Like St. Paul, he glories in his infirmities, in his sufferings, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions and in distresses (Cf. 2 Cor. xii. 10), or he strives to imitate the Apostles, who having been scourged for preaching in the name of Jesus, "went from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus." (Acts, v. 4). The man of faith is neither depressed by adversities nor saddened by misfortune, nor weakened by suffering, nor intimidated by persecution; for he puts all his trust in God, and for him God is all-sufficient and the whole world is as nothing. What courage and strength, in the performance of the most arduous duties, faith instils into the heart of the feeble and the weak! For witnesses we need only appeal to the thousands of early Christians and of Catholic missionaries of both sexes, and to the myriads of the faithful of every condition of life, who have braved all dangers and joyfully laid down their lives for their faith. He who is taught by faith, fears God, and has no other fear, for he can say with the Apostle: "No creature can separate me from the love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Cf. Rom. viii. 35, sq.)

Having learned the value and beauty of faith, we will now with the catechism consider the ways in which a person sins against faith: viz., by not trying to know what God has taught, by not believing all what God has taught, and by neglecting to profess his belief in what God has taught.

315. How do we fail to try to know what God has taught?

We fail to try to know what God has taught by neglecting to learn the Christian doctrine.

We learned in the foregoing number the value of faith and we deduced from it the necessity of acquiring a virtue of such worth. "Faith cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. x. 27). The Apostle himself explains the meaning of this citation;

for having said that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," he adds: "how then shall they call on Him, in Whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe Him, of Whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear, without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" (Rom. x. 13-15). From whom must we learn the truths that concern our destiny here and hereafter? Since the truths of our faith are supernatural, they must be learned from God. That God has spoken to us at divers times, we learned in the preceding number (314), but He mainly spoke to us through His Son Jesus Christ.

Several truths follow from the mission given by Christ to His Apostles:

1st. The Apostles are sent to all nations, and therefore all nations must accept the Gospel of Christ or the Christian doctrine preached by them.

2nd. Baptism is necessary for salvation, together with an implicit belief in all that Christ has taught; no one can be saved without it.

3rd. All people must observe what Christ has commanded under pain of condemnation.

4th. Christ, our Saviour, will assist His Apostles and their successors to preach His Gospel and teach His holy doctrine throughout the world and for all time to come, as it is for that purpose that assistance is promised. This promise of help and assistance from a God-man is equivalent to the promise of infallibility, for He sent His Apostles as He had been sent by His Father, i. e., with unlimited power. We thus conclude that it is from the Apostles and their successors until the end of time that everyone has to learn what he must believe and what he has to do to save his soul; but the successors of the Apostles are the Bishops of the Catholic Church, and therefore the latter with the Pope at their head are jointly the authoritative teachers of all revealed truth.

How do we fail to try to know what God has taught?

We fail to try to know what God has taught by neglecting to learn the Christian doctrine.

In the preceding number, we saw that it is a duty of every individual person to learn what God has taught because God has commanded it under the threat of

eternal damnation. This is so much the more urgent because the all-good and loving God has sent His only Son to teach us, and as we cannot believe until we have heard and know what we should believe, sound reason will necessarily conclude that on our willingness to learn the truths of the Gospel, depends our eternal salvation. Besides, our knowledge of revelation, which faith teaches us, is the most necessary of all knowledge; other knowledge procures us some temporal advantages, but the former teaches the way to eternal happiness. Alas, too many in the world ignore the obligation to inquire into what the Saviour has commanded His apostles and their successors to teach. Is it possibly a matter of indifference? Why do we hear so often: My religion is to do to others as I wish that others would do unto me? Is there no other commandment than that of the love of neighbor? Is our Creator, our Redeemer and Judge without appeal, not more to us than our neighbor? Has the Saviour no right to exact belief on our part when He teaches us directly by Himself, or indirectly by those He has chosen for that purpose? Indifferentism in matters of religion is the necessary outcome of the Protestantism of the sixteenth century; it is the daughter of the doctrine of private judgment in opposition to the authority of the Church; by both man spurns the authority of God and of His Church, and contemns the word of God or divine revelation. If the world is to be saved from utter ruin, it must return to the consciousness that, since God has spoken to us, we must subject our intellect and our will to His teachings. Indifferentism is as insulting to the Sovereign Majesty as it is prejudicial to our eternal welfare. We must then try to learn all that God has taught, and believe implicitly all that God has taught; I say "implicitly believe," for it does not seem reasonable that God would demand from everyone an absolutely complete knowledge of all that He has revealed; hence it is sufficient that all should learn the principal articles of faith, such as those con-

tained in the Apostles' Creed, the main truths that regard the Sacraments to be received, the necessity of prayer and of good works, and the obligations belonging to each one's state of life; and these we should know and believe explicitly; but for the people in general, the whole of divine revelation must be believed in such a manner that each one is ready to believe each and every article of faith, taught as revealed truth by Christ's ambassadors on earth, the Apostles and their successors. He that believes in general, all that Christ has taught or that is proposed to his belief by the Church, has an implicit belief in all the truths of revelation. (Cf. No. 12).

It need hardly be remarked that the revelation made by God is none other than the Christian doctrine or the doctrine of Christ, the Gospel, which the Saviour commanded His Apostles and their successors to preach, and which the Church teaches through the ministry of her bishops and priests.

We insist that our knowledge of our holy religion ought to be the more thorough, the more we advance in learning in all branches of secular knowledge. This seems to be a truth little understood by Catholic parents, and by those who are charged with the education of youth. We do not now refer so much to the obligations of Catholic fathers and mothers to send their children to Catholic schools, where they will learn their catechism and acquire the knowledge of the duties of a Christian and of all that is necessary unto salvation—for parents, who neglect that most sacred of all duties, do not deserve the name of Catholics—but we mean to say that the knowledge of divine revelation should be proportionate to the learning attained in all other branches of study.

The catechism well understood will teach our youths the principal truths of our faith: the nature and effects of the Sacraments, the necessity of prayer and of good works, the usefulness of the sacramentals and of private and public devotions, and the obligations imposed by the commandments of God and of the Church, as well as what is forbidden by them—and this knowledge is sufficient for most of those who do not attempt higher studies. But as is often the case, when boys and girls leave the elementary common school and enter high schools or universities, all study of Christian doctrine is abandoned. The higher studies develop the intellect and set young men or women thinking; they know the catechism, but cannot give reasons for the faith that is in them; they read daily newspapers,

often replete with slurs against all religion, with columns of every-day scandals, the details of divorce suits and of criminal cases; they hear arguments in favor of free thought, of naturalism and rationalism, if not of materialism, Darwinism, socialism and other isms, but not a word in favor of their own religion. Fortunate indeed they are, if they can join some Catholic club or society, where questions of religious interests are sometimes debated, and where the good example of some of their co-religionists and companions of study may draw them away from the dangers which surround them. When these good influences are wanting, they are most likely to begin to doubt; they fall into careless habits and, finally, into that indifferentism, which is the bane of all religious sentiments.

They may not stop here, but pushed on by that freedom of thought, so flattering to our innate pride, they not only begin to doubt, but may reject the truths they cannot comprehend; and they fall into rationalism, the twin sister of deism, by which the true God is banished and a new idol enthroned, viz., the idol of self and self-sufficient intellect and reason, which is equivalent to a denial of all revealed truth. Would to God that sad experience did not force upon us the conviction that he, who does not learn and know what God has taught and as much thereof explicitly as is proportionate to his secular knowledge, will soon refuse to believe all that God has taught, and cease to profess his belief openly, i. e., to practice the religion he was taught in his childhood! A miracle alone can save such a one from absolute indifferentism in matters of revealed religion, if a grosser evil, such as the security, under which materialists and agnostics live, does not allure him to his ruin.

316. Who are they, that do not believe all that God has taught?

They who do not believe all that God has taught are heretics and infidels.

The palm of religious absurdity and nonsense may be given to Protestantism for having invented the distinction between essential and non-essential truths; for lo! the wide open door to a myriad of sects, whose number equals the number of individuals professing that creed. It is not stated definitely which truths are essential and which are non-essential. Is there any article, any single truth of revelation, that is safe from this pestilential absurdity that some truths revealed by God are non-essential to true faith? If one Protestant considers a certain article as essential to his belief, others will repudiate it as non-essential; the latter have the same right as the former.

Did our Lord, when He sent His Apostles to teach all nations, make any such distinction, when He added: "He that believeth not shall be condemned"? The absurd Protestant doctrine refutes itself. Why should our all-wise God send teachers throughout the world and leave it to each individual person to accept that portion of His doctrine which suits his fancy and to reject the rest? Carry the theory to its ultimate conclusion and you will arrive at the most absurd of all absurdities, namely: that a Protestant has an incontestible right to protest against each and every revealed truth, or to retain what he may desire and believe what he pleases. The existence of a personal God is not even safe from that cancer, which eats into the very vitals of the deposit of revealed truth.

We remarked in the preceding number that implicit belief in all the articles of faith must be distinguished from the explicit knowledge of the same truths of revelation. We will now explain, what that means. When I say: "I believe there is one God in Three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; I believe that the Son of God became man and died for us, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead, and that the virtuous will be taken into heaven and the wicked will be sent into hell," I make an act of profession of faith by which I believe explicitly the following: first that there is one God; secondly, that in God there are Three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; thirdly, that the Son of God became man; fourthly, that He died for our sins; fifthly, that He will come to judge the living and the dead; sixthly, that the wicked will be punished forever in hell, and that the virtuous will be eternally happy in heaven. Six distinct and explicit truths are here enumerated, and if a Catholic believes them all and each one separately, then he believes those six truths explicitly; but if one adds to the act of faith the clause: "I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, Who canst neither deceive nor be deceived," then he believes implicitly all the truths which God has revealed and which the Church proposes to our belief, whether he actually knows them or not. That implicit faith is essential to salvation, and it admits of no distinction between important and less important, necessary and unnecessary, essential and non-essential truths; for he that denies one revealed truth, sins against faith and is guilty of heresy; he is a heretic. This doctrine conforms to the practice of the Apostles and of the Church from the early ages of Christianity, as well as to the decisions of Holy Church, and, therefore, quotations are superfluous. The history of the General or Ecumenical Councils, as well as of national or provincial

councils, testify to that fundamental doctrine. Nevertheless, knowledge of all the different dogmas or tenets of our holy religion, the sum total of which constitutes the whole revelation, is not equally necessary to all. Bishops, priests and deacons, upon whom devolves the duty to explain the Christian doctrine, should possess a sufficient knowledge of all the truths of revelation with their meaning and the proof that they belong to the deposit of faith, in order that they may teach them properly, and also lest they teach erroneous doctrines, and unconsciously be guilty of material heresy, thus leading into error those who are taught by them. Fathers and mothers and teachers in Catholic schools should thoroughly understand the catechism, the duties of parents and children, and the general obligations which religion imposes upon the faithful. The knowledge of some truths, again, is essentially necessary; so that he that ignores them forfeits his eternal salvation. There are other truths, the knowledge of which is commanded, but he that ignores them, through no fault of his, may still be saved, such as the knowledge of the nature and effects of the Sacraments which are to be received, the commandments of God and of His Church and the particular duties of one's state of life.

We now come to explain what the catechism teaches in the answer, viz., that those who do not believe all that God has taught are heretics and infidels. Our English dictionaries do not agree with Catholics in the definition of a heretic and an infidel, and Protestants cannot agree among themselves on what constitutes heresy. Among Catholic theologians an infidel (i. e., non-faithful) is simply an unbeliever, or one that has not the true faith; and in this widest sense Pagans, Jews and heretics are all infidels. (St. Thomas, II. 2, q. 10, a. 5). A heretic is one who believes that Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is the Redeemer; but does not believe all He has taught or all that the Catholic Church proposes to our belief. However, when there is question of marriage between a Catholic and non-Catholic, by a heretic is generally understood a baptized unbeliever, and by an infidel an unbaptized person. Of the three named above, viz.: Pagans, Jews, and heretics, Pagans, although they err in more points of doctrine are generally less culpable before God, as they may more easily

be excused through invincible ignorance, whilst heretics and Jews are the more obstinate and therefore more guilty. According to St. Thomas, heretics are generally more guilty than Jews and Jews more than Pagans. (St. Thos., ib. a. 6) Not all infidels and heretics are formally or wittingly such for if the true faith has never been sufficiently proposed to them, their heresy or infidelity cannot be fully imputed to them, and they are said to be material, or unwitting heretics or infidels. The Church has condemned the following proposition of Baius: "Purely negative infidelity in those, to whom God has not been preached, is a sin."

Educated infidels or unbelievers, whether baptized or not, cannot easily be excused from formal infidelity or obstinate and wilful heresy, on account of the many arguments or motives of credibility which demonstrate beyond all doubt that the dogmas taught by the Catholic Church have been revealed by God, and that, therefore, we are obliged to believe them. The scope of this work will not allow us more than to indicate these proofs: 1st. The first is taken from the prophesies relating to the life and death of the Saviour, and the spread of the Christian Religion, as found in Holy Scripture. God alone could have foreseen all the details of the Saviour's life and death, and He alone could have inspired the prophets; therefore, the faith which the prophets preached must be the true faith. 2nd. Another argument is taken from the holiness of the commandments prescribed and imposed by the Christian Religion and from the worthy means it affords for their fulfillment, as well as from the holy lives of those who keep them conscientiously. The life of one saint should convince a heretic of the truth of the Catholic faith. 3rd. Another argument is found in the wisdom which shines forth in the works and lives of the holy Doctors of the Church, who have found the dogmas of the Catholic Church the more profound and conformable to reason, the more they studied them. 4th. The fourth argument is found in the rapidity with which the Catholic Religion spread throughout the world, not by the fire and the sword, but by the simple preaching of men of humble condition without any visible human means to overcome the opposition of powerful emperors and other rulers, the jealousy and envy of pagan priests and the corruption of an idolatrous world. 5th. Another argument is deduced from the miracles wrought by Christ, His apostles and numberless saints who after the times of the Apostles contributed to the spread of the Christian religion.

6th. A similar argument is taken from the constancy of the martyrs. If true miracles must be attributed to God alone, the constancy of the martyrs in the midst of the most cruel torments is not less miraculous, and their superhuman courage must be also attributed to Divine Providence, Who wishes to attract the witnesses of their valor to a Religion whose followers are capable of such heroism, such zeal for God's glory and such disinterested love of neighbor, found even in old men, women and children, who died rather than abjure their faith. 7th. The last and the most convincing argument for the thinking people of our day is the duration of our Faith and the indestructibility of the Church during more than nineteen centuries, in spite of the many enemies from within and without, who were bent upon her destruction. Kingdoms and empires have sprung up and gone down; heresies of all shades of infidelity have followed each other, like so many phases of an ever-changing moon, but the Catholic Church remains always the same. Fearful storms have risen and subsided, but amidst them all the bark of Peter, tossed on the angry waves, glides safely on, because the Master of the universe has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Whoever has been brought face to face with the foregoing arguments and is still hardened in his obstinacy, by refusing to recognize and acknowledge the Catholic Church as the only Church instituted by Christ to teach His holy doctrine, does not differ from the fool who says in his heart: there is no God. He wilfully shuts his eyes against the light: a miracle of grace alone can save him.

317. Who are they, who neglect to profess their belief in what God has taught?

They, who neglect to profess their belief in what God has taught, are all those who fail to live up to their faith.

The answer of the catechism refers to the profession of the true faith, i. e., of revealed truths made known to us through the authoritative teachings of Holy Church, the representative of Christ on earth and the interpreters of Holy Scripture and Tradition. We may fail to acknowledge the Church and to profess the faith in private and in public, inwardly and outwardly. A person, who inwardly denies the authority of the Church to teach all things relating to salvation, is not a Cath-

olic but a heretic. A Catholic on the contrary, who although believing does not live up to his faith or does not profess his belief by his words and actions, practically denies his Church, unless some particular circumstances may excuse him from acknowledging it; e. g., a domestic, serving an heretical or infidel master, who hates the Christian religion, may in certain unavoidable circumstances conceal his faith for a time, provided he prays privately and does not simulate exteriorly a false religion. Hence a Catholic may deny his belief in two ways: indirectly, by not professing it openly, and directly, by taking part in a false worship.

Catholics believe that the true Church to which they belong, necessarily possesses the attributes of authority, infallibility and perpetuity, and that she teaches all that God has taught from the beginning of the world through Adam and Eve, through the Patriarchs, Moses and the Prophets, but mainly through the Saviour, the only-begotten Son of God. Therefore, whatever the Catholic Church teaches, was taught by God. She alone has the perpetual custody of the whole deposit of faith, and she has the sole and absolute right to impart it to the people all over the world. "As the Father has sent Me," said Christ to His Apostles, "I also send you." We should cease to be Catholics, if we obstinately denied one article of our faith taught by the Church, or refused to acknowledge the supreme authority of the Church to teach the whole divine revelation to all nations until the end of time. Those members of the true Church who believe in her divine mission and her authority to teach all nations, but fail to accept her decisions in matters of faith and morals, are neither logical nor consistent. The Church is our guide in all that regards the salvation of souls. Therefore, they who acknowledge the Church to be the true Church, and stubbornly refuse to submit to her decisions, when she condemns various systems of liberalism, socialism and modernism, or ungodly education and kindred errors, deny the Church in which they believe. What the Church condemns should be condemned by every individual Catholic. It is not necessary that the Church should always proclaim her teachings in Ecumencial Councils or through her Supreme Head in a solemn manner, i. e., "ex cathedra," for them to be binding upon her members—the absence of such a solemn declaration may possibly save the obstinate Catholic from the brand of heresy—but since the Church is a perfectly constituted society, with the power to govern all her members in all things regard-

ing the salvation of souls, all her decisions, all her condemnations, and all her decrees of whatever nature or kind, emanating from the different sacred congregations established by the Church to facilitate her government, are binding upon the consciences of all Catholics, when such decisions have the sanction of the Supreme Head of the Church.

St. Paul clearly teaches us the obligation of sincerely professing the faith, when he writes to Timothy: "But thou, O man of God, fight the good fight of faith: lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast confessed a good confession before many witnesses." (1 Tim. v. 11, 12). Timothy had made his profession of faith in his Baptism, as was usual in the conversion of Jews and Pagans; again, when he argued with the laborers and worshippers of the Temple of Diana, in Ephesus; he also made a profession of faith, as St. Thomas teaches, when he was consecrated a bishop in the Church of God, and accepted the duty to spread the Christian religion in the places confided to his spiritual care.

Among Catholics who believe their Church to be the true Church, there are many who fall into a kind of indifferentism as to all the Church teaches or commands. They banish from their mind and heart all religious sentiments, and act in all respects as if they believed not; and even there are those who neglect all their Christian duties: prayer, the Sacraments, the hearing of Mass, etc. In all their exterior demeanor there is nothing that distinguishes them from deists, rationalists, materialists or agnostics. Although they do not deny the Church in their intercourse with others, neither do they at any time acknowledge or recognize her in their words or actions, as if their faith alone were able to save them without good works, and without observing the obligations their faith imposes upon them. In such the supernatural life of the soul is dead. They may indeed still be Christians, but they are like dead members, hanging lifeless as it were from the mystical body of Christ.

There are, besides, a number of Catholics who do not go that far in their indifferentism; they may from time to time attend Church, and may even approach the Sacraments once a year; but they are taken up so much with worldly affairs and its pleasures and amusements, that any occupation is considered sufficient to excuse them from their duties as members of the true Church, in which they believe. In them also, the supernatural life of the soul is dead, and the little they do to show that they are still Catholics, may come from special graces and illuminations of the Holy Ghost; and should they neglect these last warnings, their doom might be sealed forever.

318. Can they who fail to live up to their faith, expect to be saved while in that state?

Those who fail to live up to their faith, cannot expect to be saved while in that state, for Christ has said: "Whoever shall deny Me before men, I will deny him before My Father Who is in heaven."

We have learned already that the Christian doctrine contains all that Christ revealed whilst on earth and that He continues to teach through His Church. We have also learned that Christ sent His Apostles and their successors until the end of time to preach His doctrine throughout the whole world, and to instruct all people of all nations to observe all that He had commanded them. St. Mark calls Christ's doctrine, the Gospel, and he adds that he who does not believe the teachings of Christ, the Gospel, shall be condemned. (Mark, xvi. 15, 16). St. Matthew relates that Christ directed His Apostles to teach all nations to observe all things "whatsover He had commanded them." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). Our good sense, as well as Holy Scripture, convinces us that mere belief in what God has taught, or faith alone, cannot save us, for "faith without good works in dead"; our conduct, our exterior actions should correspond to our belief. We must also observe all that Christ has commanded; but the Church is the representative of Christ upon earth, it continues Christ's mission for the salvation of souls. The Church is the custodian of all that Christ has taught, i. e., of the whole deposit of faith, as well as the interpreter of His doctrine contained in Holy Scripture and in Tradition.

In the last number we have seen that those who do not acknowledge the Church as the true and only Church established by Christ, are unbelievers, infidels, or heretics; but what of those who deny their Church by their actions, or who do not live up to their belief? Their actions belie their faith, they deny the Church by their conduct; and he that denies the Church, denies Christ Himself. This principle holds good even among the powers of this earth; when an ambassador or a great power is ignored or insulted, the whole nation, whose representative he is, resents the insult, and unless due reparation, a reparation adequate to the offense be made, the offended power will resort to arms to wipe out the disgrace, or will at least break off all diplomatic relations with the offender.

We are obliged to make open profession of our faith, (a) because we must worship God, not only with all the faculties of our intellect and of our will, together with the sentiments of the soul, but with our whole being, the body as well as the soul; (b) because we are so constituted that although our soul, the mistress of the body, enjoins upon the latter to conform itself to the interior sentiments of its mistress, exterior worship increases the ardor of our interior devotion; (c) because, as we are social beings, our exterior actions influence our fellow-men for good and evil, and if scandal is a heinous sin, a crime against the individual and against society, so likewise charity towards our neighbor often obliges us to seek his welfare by an open profession of faith; (d) finally, because God and Holy Church impose upon us obligations in which exterior worship is indispensable, e. g., when the assistance at Mass and the reception of the Sacraments, etc., are commanded.

If we compare, as to their guilt, one who does not believe in the divine institution of the Catholic Church with another who does, but who does not live up to his belief, it must be admitted that in general the latter is the more guilty of the two; for he practically denies the faith and he sins with the full consciousness of his guilt. Besides, in the former case, although there is seldom entire good faith, especially among the educated, there is at least a certain lessening of responsibility on account of the uncertainty that exists in the minds of unbelievers. This doubt, it is true, should be removed by seeking after the truth on which salvation depends; but this obligation is but vaguely understood, and, therefore, there occurs always some diminution of the guilt. Both classes are inexcusable according to the doctrine of St. Paul (Rom. i. and ii.): those that do not believe, as well as those who think their faith alone will save them. Now, all Catholics who do believe in the divine origin of their Church, and notwithstanding refuse to submit to her authority, have no excuse to offer; they practically deny the Church by denying her authority, without which she is not the Church as Christ founded her. Without authority, her usefulness is at an end. "If he will not hear the Church," says Christ, "let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." (Matt. xviii. 17). Could Our Lord be more explicit in His condemnation of those who, although Catholics in faith, deny the right of the Church to teach and guide them, and to make laws, the

observance of which she knows to be necessary or useful to their salvation? Therefore, the Catholic who does not practice his religion, denies the Church, and he that denies the Church denies Christ Himself, and to him are applicable the words of our Lord: "He that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father Who is in heaven." (Matt. x. 33). For such a one there is no salvation unless he do penance, submit to the authority of the Church, and return to the practice of the duties she imposes upon him.

319. When are we obliged to make open profession of our faith?

We are obliged to make open profession of our faith as often as God's honor or our neighbor's spiritual good, or our own requires it.

"Everyone," says Christ, "that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father Who is in heaven." (Matt. x. 32; Luke xii. 8).

We have learned in the preceding number that if we wish to save our souls, we must profess our faith openly; now, when does that obligation bind us? It is evident that this duty imposed upon us cannot bind us every moment of our lives, or everywhere, as for instance in a public square or market-place. There is, it is true, no place or time exempt from the obligation, but God and His Church require open profession of our faith only in certain circumstances; for, says the Angelic Doctor (St. Thos. II. 2. q. 3, a. 2) the confession of faith, being in the nature of something affirmative, only falls under an affirmative commandment, and this happens when God's honor or our neighbors's spiritual good or our own requires it. Charity, i. e., the love of God, of our neighbor and of ourselves, must dictate to us when and where to make open profession of our faith. The unanimous doctrine of all Catholic theologians condemns the false opinions of ancient heretics, like the Priscillianists, whose axiom was: swear, perjure thyself, but divulge not the secret; and it condemns likewise some modern heretics who taught that it is lawful to practice any religion, provided true faith remain firm in the heart. Sound reason and conscience abhor such detestible hypocrisy.

In order that no one may be ignorant of the circumstances in which it becomes a duty to profess the faith openly, the following rules will serve as a guide:

1. It is never allowed to deny the true faith or to

profess a false one, whether explicitly by word or sign or implicitly by any act, silence or omission, which ordinarily would be construed as a negation of our faith, as for instance, conspicuously to take part in the services of a false religion.

2. As a social being, every Catholic is sometimes bound to profess his faith openly; he is a member of the visible Church and of the communion of saints upon earth, in which all ought to co-operate towards the spiritual welfare of all the members; and that co-operation cannot conduce to the spiritual benefit of others if exercised by interior acts only; whereas the good example of one sincere Christian tends to strengthen the faith of many. Therefore the Catholic who, unless lawfully excused, seldom goes to Mass on Sundays, or without good reason eats meat in public on days of abstinence, or who does not make his Easter duty, acts contrary to this rule, and scandalizes his neighbor. As for a Catholic who abandons all the duties of his religion, he falls under the first rule, for he practically denies his faith by omitting all its obligations. One's duty of professing the faith openly, as a member of the Church, is sufficiently fulfilled by complying with the requirements imposed by the Church under pain of mortal sin; such as annual confession and communion, the observance of holydays of obligation, abstinence from flesh meat on Fridays and other days of abstinence, etc.

3. By divine law all are bound openly to profess their faith, even if the act involves the danger of death, provided that by failure to do so, the honor due to God would be contemned or despised, as when one remained silent when asked by lawful authority whether he is a Christian or a Catholic; or provided the spiritual good of our neighbor requires such a profession, as would be the case, if an influential Catholic, accused, before a crowd of infidels and several other Catholics, of being a Christian or a Catholic, should give an evasive answer which he knows would cause many others to deny the

faith. Let it be understood, nevertheless, that this obligation does not bind, if only one or two Catholics might be led to forswear their faith by his failure to profess his belief openly; for no one is obliged to expose himself to the danger of death to save one or two persons from the danger of denying the faith, since it is supposed that he does not directly induce others to sin.

When is it lawful to conceal one's faith?

1. It is allowed when there is no obligation to confess the faith, provided there be no danger of scandal, and provided no false religion be feigned or simulated.

2. It is forbidden when an open profession of faith is commanded, or when the honor of God, our own good, or the good of our neighbor requires it.

3. To conceal one's faith becomes an obligation when in the absence of those circumstances which impose an open profession, there would be danger of greater blasphemy against God or of a great commotion which would expose a person to suffer serious injury or death. From this we may conclude that a Catholic, being among infidels who hate Christians and are known to persecute them, may eat meat on Fridays; but this would not be allowed if, in hatred of the true religion, he were forced to do so, as a proof that he is not a Christian or that he is willing to abjure the faith. We see glorious examples of faithful Jews, refusing to dissimulate the faith, in the history of the martyrdom of Eleazar and of the seven brothers with their mother, during the persecution of King Antiochus. (2 Mach. vi. and vii).

A Catholic, if publicly interrogated by a private individual whether he is a Catholic, may answer in a non-committal way or by another question, as for instance: "Do you wish to insult me? Pray, what is a Catholic?" The answer of the opponent will generally suggest an evasion by another question, e. g.: Do you think that I am a man who would go to a priest to confession and offer him money to forgive my sins? But such dissimulation is not allowed if one is interrogated by a judge or magistrate, with authority to examine those under his charge, nor is one then allowed to remain silent.

4. In a time of general persecution by public edict, if all Catholics be ordered to present themselves before the prosecuting magistrate, no one would in conscience be obliged to deliver himself up; and, furthermore, all should flee if possible, except bishops and parish priests, who should remain with those that cannot escape, for to them applies the obligation to "give up their lives for the flock." If the persecution be directed

mainly against priests and religious, let them flee with all those whose lives are sought, or on whom great harm is impending; but priests may remain with their flock, if in their judgment such course would redound more to the honor of God and the salvation of souls.

320. Which are the sins against hope?

The sins against hope are presumption and despair.

Hope, as an act of the theological virtue already explained, is an expectation, joined to a firm trust, of eternal happiness to be attained by the grace of God and by good works (St. Thos. I. 2, q. 10, a. 1). There are four things to be noted in this definition of an act of hope, to which the virtue inclines us: (a) it is an expectation with a firm trust; (b) the good we hope for, viz., eternal life; (c) the grace of God; (d) our co-operation by good works.

Our expectation and trust should be firm, for it rests upon the promise of God, upon His fidelity to accomplish His promise, as well as on His Almighty power. There can be no question about His promise of eternal happiness and of the graces and the help we may need to obtain eternal happiness, provided we seek with a free will the means of grace He has instituted and perform the good works He has enjoined. The danger thus lies in us, for to arrive at eternal salvation a firm trust and our co-operation by good works is absolutely required.

1. Trust in God, and that a firm trust without misgivings, is required from us, yea, it is imposed upon us all. The whole economy of the Christian religion is based upon the desire and will of God to save all people; for "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." (Ezech. xxxiii. 11). Christ came upon earth and He died to save all men. There is no truth oftener inculcated in the life and teaching of our Saviour, and in the inspired writing of His Apostles, than His will to save all men without exception: the

Incarnation and the public life of our Lord, His heavenly doctrine, His passion and death remain a sealed book without that fundamental truth. The Saviour's words and all His works, from His birth until He finally left this earth on the day of His glorious ascension, are stamped with the seal of His love for man. Therefore, also, God the Father gave His Son, when He sent Him upon earth, a name above all other names, a name dear to the heart of the Father, the name of Jesus, Saviour; for Scripture says that this name was given Him by the Angel before He was conceived in the womb.

2. If the whole economy of the Christian religion attests the will of God to save all men, it is just as certain that He will not save us without our co-operation. "He that made you," says St. Augustine, "without your aid, will not save you without your co-operation"; and St. Peter, exhorting all men to assure their entrance into the heavenly kingdom, uses these words: "Wherefore, brethren, labor the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election." (2 Peter i. 10). The whole second chapter of the Epistle of St. James is devoted to inculcating the truth that "Faith without works is dead." The reaffirmation of the ten commandments, the eight beatitudes, many of the parables of our Lord, the virtues He taught by word and example, and finally His sentence on the just and on the wicked at the last day, all teach clearly the necessity of good works to attain salvation.

3. That hope, which reposes on the omnipotence, mercy, and promise of God and which therefore cannot fail us, is often inculcated by the Apostle St. Paul: "Hope confoundeth not" (Rom. v. 5), and he compares it to the anchor that remains immovable and firm in the midst of the angry waves. (Heb. vi. 17). Still our salvation is uncertain on our part, for we are not sure of our fidelity in co-operating with the grace of God, and therefore we should work out our salvation in fear and trembling. (Phil. ii. 12). The anchor will not save

all on the ship attached to it, but only those who labor faithfully under the Captain in all kinds of weather, for their own safety and the safety of those on board.

4. Habitual hope or the virtue of hope is necessary for salvation, because it is annexed to sanctifying grace, and although it is not inseparable from it, if hope is lost, grace is lost. (Cf. lesson on virtues). As faith is necessary unto salvation, so is also the virtue of hope, i. e., that hope by which we firmly trust that God will give us eternal life and the means to obtain it. Acts of hope are enjoined when we arrive at the use of reason, in great temptations against hope which otherwise cannot be overcome, and several times during our lives. Like all other commandments it is negative as well as affirmative, and forbids what is opposed to hope: viz., presumption and despair.

321. What is presumption?

Presumption is a rash expectation of salvation without making proper use of the necessary means to obtain it.

The answer of the catechism refers only to presumption among Catholics, and not to the presumption of the Pelagians or of the heretics of the sixteenth century. The Pelagians taught that man can, unaided by God, attain salvation by his own natural efforts; Luther and Calvin, and most of their followers, pretended that men have no need of good works, that their faith alone will save them. Both doctrines are heretical, and have no further place here; a mere mention of these heresies suffices.

The catechism teaches that it is presumptuous to expect salvation rashly, without using the necessary means to attain it. This will become clear when we have given the different ways of sinning by presumption.

1. He sins mortally by presumption and against the Holy Ghost, who expects to save his soul but neglects to have recourse to the means instituted by Christ for its salvation. The means necessary for salvation are the Sacraments, prayer and the observance of the commandments, as well as the practice of the virtues of

one's state of life. He who neglects any of those means, or considers them unnecessary, because he hopes to be saved without them, commits a grievous sin of presumption, because it is an abuse of God's goodness, mercy and justice. (See Sins against the Holy Ghost).

2. Likewise he that puts off his conversion, trusting that he will at the hour of death receive sufficient means of salvation, either through the last Sacraments or through an act of perfect contrition, rashly hopes for the means of grace: such temerity is presumption, and like the preceding, an abuse of God's infinite perfections. In the first case, he relies rashly upon God's mercy, and in the second case, he relies upon his own strength to elicit an act of perfect contrition; both expectations are presumptuous, although the former is the more sinful as being directly against God (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 21, a. 1); and it makes no difference whether the confidence regards salvation itself or the means of grace.

3. We have seen that to live in the state of sin and to defer our conversion, expecting and trusting that God will surely pardon us when we are ready to turn to Him, is a sinful and wicked presumption; but is it presumption when the hope of forgiveness is simultaneous with the act of sinning? "It must be said," says St. Thomas (II. 2, q. 21, a. 2 to 3), "that to sin with the intention to persevere in sin and with the hope of pardon, is presumption; and this (hope) does not diminish but increases the sin. But if one sins, led onward by the hope of obtaining pardon in some future time, when he will have made a resolution to abstain from sinning and to be sorry for his sins, such hope is not presumption, and it probably diminishes the guilt, for by it he seems to have a less firm will to commit sin."

4. He is guilty of presumption who commits sin or continues in sin, because he is confident that God will as easily forgive a large number as a smaller number of sins; but, although a grievous offense, it would not be presumption, if one were to commit sin, because it

is as easy to confess a larger as a lesser number of sins, or because it causes no more shame.

5. Although not presumptuous, it is a sin against hope to wish to live forever on this earth, because it is preferring the goods of this world to the happiness of heaven; but such a desire, at least among practical Catholics, is generally accompanied by the fear of eternal perdition, and in that case, the desire of remaining always on earth would not exceed a venial sin. The same may be said of those who love the pleasures of the present time to the extent of wishing that they would never end, and that life would be prolonged forever; provided that the pleasures of this life are not preferred to the joys of heaven, for, as we have said before, it would be a mortal sin to prefer the pleasures of this world to the happiness of heaven.

As to those who wish for death on account of their misfortunes or sufferings, such a wish is not properly a sin against hope, which consists in trusting in God for the fulfillment of His promises; and it generally does not exceed a venial sin, unless the wish to die would include a spirit of rebellion against God, or a denial of what our Religion teaches on sin and its consequences, or a denial of Divine Providence and Justice, which often happens among the wicked.

322. What is despair?

Despair is the loss of hope in God's mercy.

The catechism here gives the general reason why people despair of their salvation, for usually they have the conviction that their sins are too enormous, or too numerous, ever to obtain mercy from their just Judge. According to St. Ligori (xi. 21 and H. A., iv. 6, 7), our hope is based upon God's omnipotence, mercy and infinite goodness towards us, and upon His fidelity to His promises; therefore, in order to include all possible cases, he defines despair as a voluntary abandonment of all hope, whether of salvation or of the means to obtain it.

1. Despair, to be truly such, must be voluntary or premeditated, for, if it spring from a momentary discouragement, which excludes either a premeditated knowledge or full consent of the will, it is not a grievous sin, nor a sin of despair.

2. It must be an abandonment or relinquishment of all hope, and hence it does not consist in a mere neglect or omission to elicit an act prompted by the virtue of hope. A doubt about salvation is not despair, for despair consists in this, that a despairing sinner rejects all further trust in God, abandons all hope of ever obtaining heaven, and, therefore, rejects all the means of salvation.

3. We say "all hope," for he that had still the smallest hope, either of attaining eternal bliss or the least trust in the efficacy of the Sacraments which would procure it, cannot be said to be completely despairing.

4. That voluntary despair is a mortal sin, no one may doubt, as it is directly opposed to the omnipotence, mercy, and fidelity of God; it is besides a sin again the Holy Ghost, as it is an implied denial of the power of grace and of the possibility of our sanctification, a work especially attributed to the Holy Ghost.

5. We should not conclude from what has been said, that he who mistrusts God's mercy, fidelity or omnipotence, commits a double sin; he commits a mortal sin, which, on account of the particular nature and gravity of the offense, is called a sin against the Holy Ghost, a sin which cannot be forgiven in this world or in the next, i. e., is seldom forgiven. (Cf. No. 50).

6. Despair is therefore of all sins the most dangerous to salvation, for although it is less sinful than hatred of God, or obstinate and wilful infidelity, he that abandons all hope of salvation cannot be recalled from iniquity, or be induced to practice any good works; he usually falls headlong into the worst crimes, until, unable to bear the guilt of his own conscience, he seeks relief in death and commits suicide. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 20, a. 3).

In the midst of great calamities and sufferings in soul and body, the simple thought of the eternal pains of hell, or of the never-ending joys of heaven, or a glance at the Crucifix will ordinarily dispell all temptations to despair, especially so, if the sufferer will turn to the Mother of Sorrows for aid and relief.

323. How do we sin against the love of God?

We sin against the love of God by all sin, but particularly by mortal sin.

It seems expedient to repeat here some things al-

ready explained in other parts of the Catechism about the love of God and charity in general, for the better understanding of the sins against the love of God. (Cf. No. 109). Charity may be considered as an infused or an habitual virtue, and as such, it is a virtue which inclines us to love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. Charity, as an infused virtue, is poured into the soul with sanctifying or habitual grace. (St. Thomas P. I, q. 43, a. 3). "The charity of God is poured forth in our heart, by the Holy Ghost Who is given to us." (Rom. v. 5). The love of neighbor and the love of ourselves, although only secondary, cannot be separated from the love of God. The God Who demands our love, also commands the love of ourselves and of our neighbor. Let it be also remembered that "he that loves Me," says the Lord Jesus, "keeps My commandments" (John xiv. 15), and therefore he that sins against the commandments of God and of His Church sins against the love of God.

The love of God also extends to all our obligations towards God, towards the Church and her members, towards all lawful superiors, towards inferiors, towards our neighbor in general, towards our friends and enemies as well as towards ourselves, towards the dead and the living; it enters into the duties we have to perform and the virtues we have to practice as well as into the efforts we make to shun sins and vices, whether they be of thought, words or deeds; and all these obligations may be reduced to two commandments: love God above all things and your neighbor as yourself.

Someone may object that it is difficult in that long array of obligations, to distinguish between venial and mortal sins, or to know whether one sins grievously or slightly, or whether one's sin deserves eternal or only temporal punishment, or whether this or that sin destroys the supernatural life of the soul and takes away sanctifying grace or only tarnishes the beauty of the soul. All should know that any sin of omission or commission, whether venial or mortal, is opposed to the love we owe to our God; for there can be no sin unless we omit or neglect what God commands or do what He forbids in thought, word or deed. Does it become a Catholic to speculate whether this or that act or omission constitutes a mortal or only a

venial sin? Is it not rather his duty to serve God in small as well as in greater things? Has sin, whether mortal or venial ceased to be the greatest evil in this world? It is true that a thousand venial sins will not make one mortal sin; but venial sin leads to mortal sin (Cf. No. 58), and every one who has his salvation at heart, will avoid not only what damns his soul forever, if not remitted before death, but also every wilful act which offends his Maker and may finally lead to eternal perdition.

Of course, there is question here only of wilful and deliberate venial sins and not of those imperfections or slight offenses committed without sufficient reflection or through inadvertence or negligence, such as some little angry or jealous feeling of a transitory nature, which is neither fully deliberate nor entirely wilful, or some little complacency or movement of pride in one's attainments. In such like, even "a just man shall fall seven times," i. e., many times, in the phrase of Holy Scripture, "and shall rise again" (Prov. xxiv. 16); but no just man can for a long time do freely and wilfully what he knows to be sinful and make light of it, because it is only a venial sin; for that is wicked, and "the wicked shall fall down into evil," i. e., into mortal sin, from which he cannot extricate himself without a special grace from God. (Ibid.)

LESSON THE THIRTY-FIRST

THE HONOR AND INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS

323. Does the First Commandment forbid the honoring of the Saints?

The First Commandment does not forbid the honoring of the saints, but rather approves of it; because by honoring the saints who are the chosen friends of God, we honor God Himself.

The Council of Trent (Sess. 25, Decree on Invocation) teaches at length that the saints who reign with Christ pray for men and that it is lawful and useful to ask their help before God through Jesus Christ our Saviour. From this we naturally conclude that it is also lawful to honor the saints.

The first question is: Who are saints? Saints are

those men and women to whom, on account of their heroic virtues while on earth, the Church has decreed religious worship, as friends of God reigning now with Christ in heaven. Therefore we may honor them and ask their intercession in our behalf. If they are canonized saints, such honor may be given to them throughout the Catholic world; but if they are beatified only, that honor is restricted to some particular places and to some particular devotions. This honor was at first attributed only to martyrs; but when the persecutions ceased in the fourth century, the same honor was paid to others who had led eminently holy lives. Although the Sovereign Pontiffs have always exercised supreme authority in the matter, still the honor given to some particular saints by spontaneous and popular consent was sometimes approved by the bishop of the locality where the departed saints had lived or died. Before the time of Innocent II, and Alexander III, the solemn processes of canonization, as they exist to-day, were not in use; but from all the many testimonies of the early Fathers, it is plain that at all times a special honor was attributed to the martyrs, on whose tombs the Sacrifice of the Mass was offered and that later the same honor was bestowed on those eminent for the sanctity of their lives. What honor is due to saints? It is evident that adoration or supreme worship is due to God only. "God alone shalt thou adore," and this highest religious worship, there is a relative or subordinate veneration, which ship, there is relative or subordinate veneration, which we render to the saints or friends of God, and this honor is called "dulia." Finally, the special veneration which is rendered to the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God, is called "hyperdulia." Whether we honor the angels as God's messengers, or the saints as His friends, that veneration is given them because they are participants of God's glory and, therefore, have a merit proper to themselves, as faithful stewards in the household of God. But all the honor bestowed upon them redounds

to the honor of God, Whose faithful servants they have been; and, therefore, the veneration paid to them is only a relative worship, for it necessarily refers to God as the Source of all goodness and holiness. Hence, by honoring the angels and the saints, we honor God Himself.

The same worship which is given to the Infinite Majesty is due also to Christ our Saviour, on account of the hypostatic union of the divine with the human nature. We call it hypostatic, because the two natures exist in one Person, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. The supreme worship of "latria" is due also to the Blessed Sacrament, for in it, under the appearances of bread and wine, Jesus dwells whole and entire, as God and as Man. This supreme and absolute worship is likewise due to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to His Holy Face, because His Heart and Face are the heart and face of God; but the worship bestowed on the Holy Name, although one of "latria," is not absolute, but relative, inasmuch as the Holy Name only puts us in mind of our Saviour; and the same must be said of the images of Christ and such relics as those of the true cross, the nails, the lance, the thorns, which at least touched the sacred body of our Lord: they all remind us of our Saviour, and to Him the worship is transferred.

In answer to the objections of some so-called Christians, who accuse Catholics of illicit worship of angels and saints, Scripture and Tradition will show that it is lawful to bestow upon them some kind of worship. "When Josue was in the field of the City of Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and saw a man standing over against him, holding a drawn sword, and he went to him, and said: Art thou one of ours, or one of our adversaries? And he answered: no; but I am prince of the host of the Lord, and now I am come. Josue fell on his face to the ground and worshipping said: What saith my Lord to His servant?" (Jos. i. 13-15). Here is an angel of the Lord's host, worshipped or venerated as such by Josue, for he asks the wishes of the Lord, Who sent the messenger. Was Josue rebuked. On the contrary he was told to take off his shoes in sign of veneration and he obeyed. The context moreover shows that the same angel instructed Josue how to capture Jericho.

St. Justin in his Apology defends the Catholic doctrine by approving the honor given to the army of angels. The Church of Smyrna, in its Epistle on the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, praises and upholds the love towards the martyrs by which they were honored as disciples and imitators of Christ. St. Cyprian and St. Basil attest the custom of celebrating the anniversary of the martyrs' deaths. St. Gregory of Nazianzen also mentions the custom; and St. Cyril of Alexandria explains at great length the honor and affection which the Christians had for their martyrs, and what he says of them can also be applied to all saints, as well as to the martyrs. "We honor the servants," says St. Jerome, "that the honor may redound to the Lord."

In 4 Kings ii. 15, we see how the sons or disciples of the prophets worshipped Eliseus, because the spirit of Isaias was upon him; but why multiply citations? Do we not honor ambassadors and friends of kings or of those in supreme power? Should we not also honor those who have well served the King of kings? Should we not honor on earth those whom the Lord of Hosts honors in heaven?

324. Does the first commandment forbid us to pray to the saints?

The first commandment does not forbid us to pray to the Saints.

St. Thomas shows the reasonableness and propriety of having recourse to angels and saints in our prayers, by teaching that we should ask the saints to intercede for us, for the reason that the order instituted by God demands that those farther away from God, like those who still dwell in the flesh, be united to God by those who are near Him, and, therefore, we should ask the saints near Him to pray for us.

As usual, we shall go to the sources of revelation, viz., Holy Scripture and Tradition, to confirm the doctrine of the Church.

When Joseph on his death-bed blessed Ephraim and Manasses, he said: "The angel that delivereth me from all evils, bless these boys; and let my name be called upon them, and the names of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac." (Gen. xlviii. 16). Who was that angel invoked by Jacob but the one he considered as his tutelary or guardian angel? (Gen. xxxii. 24, sq.) Jacob confided in the angel to bless his children. Moreover, God was frequently called by the Jewish people the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and by this practice, the Jews hon-

ored their patriarchs by associating their names with God, and thus indirectly invoked them. This relative honor appears in a stronger light in the prayer for mercy which Moses addressed to God, when the people had made to themselves a golden calf: "Remember, O Lord, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, thy servants, to whom Thou hast sworn, etc." Is this not similar to the way in which we ask God's blessings through the intercession of the saints? Influenced by the same spirit, and fully aware of the profit of invoking those whom God had favored in a special manner, Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, prays as follows: "Remember the mercies of David, thy servant." (2 Paral. vi. 42). Again in Psalm cxxxi. 10, we read: "For thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of thy anointed." Jeremiah relates the following: "The Lord said to me: if Moses and Samuel stood before me, my soul is not towards this people." (Jer. xv. 1). The three young men in the fiery furnace prayed thus to the Lord: "Do not take away Thy mercy from us, for the sake of Abraham Thy beloved, Isaac Thy servant and Israel Thy holy one." (Dan. iii. 35).

Judas Machabeus in a dream saw Onias, a former High Priest raising his hands and praying for all the Jewish people. Afterwards he saw Jeremiah of whom Onias said: "This is he that prayeth much for the people and for the whole holy city, Jeremias, the Prophet of God." (2 Mach. xv. 12). The events that happened thereafter proved the dream to have come from God, and Judas related it to encourage his troops, promising them victory, if they put all their trust in God. Their confidence was rewarded by the signal defeat of the enemy.

After these direct testimonies, we add those passages in which angels are said to offer up prayers for those still on earth: "When thou didst pray with tears, I offered thy prayer to the Lord," said the Angel Raphael to Tobias. (Tob. xii. 12). If it is acceptable to God when the just pray for their fellowmen on earth, should we not conclude that their prayers, when they are before the throne of God, will be still more acceptable? God sent the friends of Job back to him, with these words: "Go to My servant Job, and offer for yourselves a holocaust: and My servant Job shall pray for you; his face I will accept, that folly be not imputed to you." (Job. xlii. 8). No other sense could these words of God have than that He would withhold His forgiveness until Job prayed for his friends. Why did St. Paul so often recommend himself to the prayers of his brethren, as when he said: "I beseech you brethren, . . . to help me by your prayers to God for me"; and why did St. James tell the Christians: "Pray one for another that you may be saved" (James v. 16), unless those two Apostles were convinced that such prayers are pleasing to God and useful to those for whom

they are offered? If the simple prayers of the faithful are efficacious, will not the prayers of the saints in heaven be still more powerful in behalf of their brethren on earth?

St. Cyprian follows the example of St. Paul, in asking the prayers of the faithful; Origen and St. Basil testify to the general practice in the Church to pray one for another; and various other Fathers of the Church also speak of the same practice; but St. Jerome should be particularly quoted, because he wrote against Vigilantius who had taught that, although whilst on earth we may pray one for another, our prayers after our death cannot help another. He refuted Vigilantius with the same arguments we use against the heretics of our day: "If the Apostles and martyrs," says St. Jerome, "when still existing in the flesh, can pray for others whilst they must sill be solicitous about themselves, how much more powerful intercessors are they after their crowns, victories and triumphs. If one man, Moses, obtained from God forgiveness for six hundred armed soldiers, if Stephen, the imitator of his Lord and the first martyr in Christ, asked pardon for his persecutors, will they be less powerful when they are in company with Christ? . . . . Finally, saints are not said to be dead, but to be alive." No wonder, then, that St. Augustine says of St. Cyprian: "May he help us by his prayers, so that we may imitate his good deeds"; and that the Council of Chalcedon, speaking of the martyr Flavian, says: "Flavian lives after his death: may the martyrs pray for us."

325. What do we mean by praying to the saints?

By praying to the saints we mean the asking of their help and prayers.

This question and answer would hardly be necessary, were it not that some heretics and infidels, even in our day, accuse Catholics of an idolatrous worship, alleging that we attribute to saints a power that belongs to God alone. "Catholics," they say, "address themselves preferably to saints rather than to God." "When they recite the beads," they continue, "there are ten 'Hail Marys' for one 'Our Father.' In their prayer books there are prayers addressed to every saint in their calendar, but too few prayers directed to God." Men who write or speak in that manner are not sincere. Even if one addresses his prayers rather to the saints than directly to God, it should be ascribed to the humility of the peti-

tioner, who considers himself unworthy to appear in the presence of the all-holy God, and, therefore, asks the friends of God to intercede for him. We honor the saints because God decrees it or at least approves of it, as has been shown in the two preceding numbers. We honor especially the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of the God-Man. To the Mother of God is rendered that veneration called "hyperdulia," i. e., the highest worship that may be given to a creature, but never the worship of "latria," the supreme worship due to God alone. The saints, according to Catholic doctrine, are powerful in heaven and among them the Blessed Virgin may be said to be all-powerful, not by their and her natural power, but by the power which God has given to all His saints. There is no Catholic who believes the saints, or even the Mother of God, to have any power inherent in them and independent of God. God alone is by nature all-powerful or almighty. He alone is absolute or independent of anyone, and, therefore, all power comes from Him; besides, the power of all the angels and saints is only a power of intercession. They stand as it were between God and us; they intercede for us; and, as we have seen in the case of the friends of Job, God sometimes grants favors in response to the desire or prayer of saints or angels, when otherwise He would not hear the prayers of those who, on account of their sins, are unworthy of being heard. Again, when Catholics pray, they attribute all merit to Jesus Christ, our Saviour; for any individual merit of any saint comes from the infinite merits of Him Who assumed human nature and died for us that men might participate in His merits. Hence, the public prayers of the Church always end with the words: "through Jesus Christ our Lord," or with some longer conclusion of the same import. By praying to the saints we mean then nothing less nor more, than asking their intercession and their prayers in our behalf, because we are convinced of our unworthiness of obtaining any favor from God, and, therefore, we ask help and aid

from the friends of God, who see God face to face and understand His willingness to concede what they ask. Those that feel inclined to a greater devotion for one saint than for another, should not be blamed for it, provided no saint, no friend of God, be despised; but in general, it is more fitting to invoke those angels and saints whom the Church has appointed patrons of special favors and graces, and it seems consonant with the will of God that we have recourse, at times, to all of God's angels and saints in the court of heaven.

It behooves us now to give the reasons why the Church venerates the Blessed Virgin with a superior worship or reverence, called "hyperdulia," i. e., the greatest homage we are allowed to render to any creature.

THE REVERENCE OR WORSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The word "latria," from the Greek "latreia" was used among the Greeks to denote the worship of the gods, and Catholics have adopted it to designate the service and worship due to the Supreme Being. The word "dulia" from the Greek "douleia" or "doulia," means the service of man to man, like that of slaves to their master, and the Catholic theologians have adopted it to designate the service due to the servants of God, angels as well as saints. Accordingly "hyperdulia," from "hyper," above and "douleia," expresses the veneration or service above all other service, or the greatest service that may be rendered to a creature of God.

The word "hyperdulia" would be a misnomer, unless it can be rightly asserted that the Blessed Virgin is so exalted by God, above all angels and saints, as to deserve that special worship.

The Blessed Virgin is the Mother of God.

When we assert that the Blessed Virgin is the Mother of God, we do not mean that she gave birth to the divinity of Christ, separate from His humanity, nor that she could in any way be the origin of the eternal Son of God, or be the cause of the existence of one of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity; but we do mean that as Jesus Christ is the Son of God, or the Word, as He is often called in Holy Scripture, and since He is also true man, and since the nature of God and the nature of man were at His Incarnation united under one Person, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, then the Blessed Virgin in giving birth to our Saviour in the stable of Bethlehem, became in reality the true Mother of Jesus, the

God-Man, and, therefore, she is truly the Mother of God.

Nestorius taught that the Person of Christ and the Person of the Word or Son of God are not one and the same person, and therefore refused to the Blessed Virgin the title of Mother of God: he called her the Mother of Christ. We shall now see that the monstrous heresy was rightly condemned and for various reasons.

To understand what is meant by a person, let us consider our own nature. Man is composed of a material body and of a spiritual soul, and these two substances, so widely different, form, nevertheless, but one person. Our body and soul act together independently of any other person: it is I that think, I that speak and act. The soul has command over the body, and the body moves at the will of the soul: I am conscious that this power does not belong to any other person.

The doctrine of the Catholic Church that the Blessed Virgin Mary must in a proper and true sense be called the Mother of God, and, therefore, that she is worthy of all the veneration the Catholic Church bestows upon her, is easily proved by consulting the Holy Scriptures and the Tradition of the Church:

1. That the Blessed Virgin is truly the Mother of God is a dogma of our faith, and was defined in the Council of Ephesus, in 431, during the Pontificate of Pope Celestine, the same Council that condemned Nestorius, and again in the second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople. (Cf. St. Thos. P. III, q. 35, a. 3, 4).

2. Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Ghost, called Mary the Mother of the Lord: "Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke i. 42, 43). The angel on the day of the Annunciation had called the fruit of her womb the "Son of God": "The holy which shall be born of Thee, shall be called the Son of God." (Ib.)

3. Those citations naturally led many of the early Fathers to call the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God; and of this we find examples in St. Ignatius, St. Justin, St. Athanasius, etc. St. Cyril of Alexandria gives the reason of the appellation, and it is the same we find in our catechisms of today, viz., because the same Divine Person, Who is the Son of God, is also the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

4. Shall we refuse to venerate in some special manner the highly privileged Virgin, who is acknowledged by the angel, by St. Elizabeth in her ecstasy of delight and admiration, by the most famous Councils of the Church, and by so many of the learned Fathers of the Church, to be the Mother of God? Truly the Virgin herself in a prophetic vision foresaw this veneration, when she said: "Henceforth all generations shall

call me blessed"; and, as Bishop Pearson, though an Anglican, remarks, this goes to show that "we should particularly esteem her according to her great dignity and besides, our obligation is to call her blessed and venerate her accordingly." (The Creed, Art. 3). "If Elizabeth," continues Bishop Pearson, "exclaimed with a loud voice: 'Blessed are thou amongst women,' what expression of honor and admiration can we think sufficient, now that Christ is in heaven and His Mother with Him?"

Mary, the Mother of God, remained a virgin before and after the birth of Christ.

When the angel at the Annunciation, disclosed to Mary, the spouse of Joseph, that she would conceive and bring forth a son, she asked: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" Why this question, if Christ was to be conceived and to be born in a natural manner? The answer to her question and the explanation of the angel, that the Holy Ghost would come upon her, and that the power of the Most High would overshadow her, conclusively prove the teaching of the Church that Mary remained a virgin until the birth of Christ.

The Mother of God remained a virgin after the birth of Christ. After childbirth, says St. Gregory of Nyssa, the undefiled virgin adds, through her virginity, luster and glory to her Son. To say that she, declares St. John Chrysostom, who by her undefiled integrity set up the standard of Christ, did not preserve her virginity, is so great a sacrilege that it should not remain unpunished. "We believe," says St. Jerome, "that God was born of a virgin, because we have read it: we do not believe that Mary married after childbirth, because we do not read it," i. e., because nowhere is mention made of a subsequent marriage. St. Epiphanius teaches likewise: "Thus holy Mary is called a virgin, nor will this appellation ever be changed." St. Augustine and lesser teachers in the early Church concur in the same doctrine about the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God; and if we add to this testimony, the mention made of her in the Council of Chalcedon and in the Third Council of Constantinople, wherein the former affirms that the dignity of God demands the perpetual virginity of the Mother of Christ, and the latter clearly sets forth Mary's virginity before childbirth, during childbirth and after childbirth, we do not wonder that in the Oxford Tracts we find the following: "The perpetual virginity of the Mother of God, our Saviour, is so natural a thing and so universally received that I do not see why we should not look upon it as a genuine Apostolic Tradition." May the good God bring all sincere Protestants to recognize the great dignity of the Blessed Virgin, and to honor her accordingly. It will be for them, as it is for us, the means of many graces and of ultimate salvation.

The third title to our veneration of the Blessed Virgin is found in her Immaculate Conception. The proclamation of this dogma will forever make the pontificate of Pius IX. memorable: it redounds to the sanctity and holiness of the Blessed Trinity, as well as to the exalted dignity and perfections of the Blessed Virgin. It explains how the three divine Persons singularly contributed to the eminent purity, dignity and holiness of her whom every devout Christian calls blessed among women, i. e., above all creatures. The Father, as Creator, fashions an angel above all angels in purity, spotless and immaculate; the Son chooses her as Mother; and the Holy Ghost adorns the holy Virgin with all the virtues suitable to her dignity and makes her a sacred temple wherein He loves to dwell. "Pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non est in te." Thou art beautiful, O Mary, and there is no original blemish or macula in thee. These words express the admiration of Holy Church, contemplating the exalted prerogatives of the holy Virgin of Nazareth, the masterpiece of God's creation. Glory be to the Father, Who has created thee immaculate, O Mary; glory be to the Son, Who chose thee for His Mother and is thy Son also; glory be to the Holy Ghost, Who has sanctified thee, for thou art full of grace. (Cf. No. 50).

326. How do we know that the saints hear us?

We know that the saints hear us, because they are with God, Who makes our prayers known to them.

This answer teaches us that the saints being with God, are made acquainted with the prayers we address to them, and the reason thereof is that as the saints see God face to face, they see in the Divine Essence, or at least by divine revelation, whatever concerns God's glory and their own. Whilst on earth they labored and prayed for the spiritual welfare of their fellow-men, and now that they are in Heaven and have no longer any solicitude about their own happiness which is assured for ever, shall they have the salvation of souls less at heart? If they are still interested in our welfare, or if the honor we give them by seeking their help is acceptable to them, who can doubt that God makes them acquainted with what greatly concerns them?

Christ Himself testified that there is joy in Heaven upon one sinner doing penance; and those that give scandal are re-

minded that the angels of the little ones always see the face of God, i. e., see God in his essence, in which the angels see the scandal committed against the little ones, whose guardians they are. (Matt. xviii. 10). From this we conclude again, that the angels and saints by the sight of God, not only contemplate His nature and divine perfections, but are also made acquainted with all that concerns them, such as the honor we pay them, the prayers we address to them, and the confidence we place in them. Although the Church has not determined by any decision, the mode of the saints' knowledge concerning the things that happen on earth, the opinion of St. Thomas may safely be followed. He explains the point in question simply and clearly. He first teaches that the saints in Heaven have a perfect knowledge of everything that happens in this world and that interests them: not by their nature but by a special dispensation of God, in Whose infinite wisdom they participate in some manner. (St. Thomas, P. I, q. 89, a. 8, c.) The Angelic Doctor teaches moreover that the saints see in the Divine Essence all that occurs on earth and concerns them, but whether the saints, who see God face to face, know by intuition what interests them or by revelation, it matters not; it is sufficient for our purpose that they are cognizant of the fact, when we address our prayers to them. (Cf. St. Thos. Supp. P. III, q. 72, a. 1).

327. Why do we believe that the saints will help us?

We believe that the saints will help us, because both they and we are members of the same Church, and they love us as their brethren.

The catechism in this number begins by telling us why we should have confidence in the disposition of the saints to help us, and it says that it is because there exists a spiritual relationship, a certain community of interest between us and the citizens of Heaven.

The Council of Trent lays down the belief of the Church concerning the intercession and invocation of saints, for it teaches "that the saints who reign with Christ, offer up their prayers to God for men; that it is good and useful to invoke them with supplication, and to have recourse to their prayers and their help in order to obtain favors from God, through His Son, Jesus

Christ, Who is our sole Saviour and Redeemer." (Trent, Sess. 25, on Invocation of Saints).

Whether or not the saints in heaven are disposed to help us, depends first on the community of interests between the citizens of heaven and the inhabitants of this earth, and, secondly, on the will of God.

1. The saints were once what we are now, i. e., struggling for salvation, subject to the same trials and beset by the same enemies. They walked in the path marked out by the Saviour's teachings and example, and they understood better than we the words of the Master: "This is My commandment that you love one another, as I have loved you." (John, xv. 12). Now their trials are over and they have secured the reward of their victory. Can we for one moment think that they who received the crown of immortality for their love of God and their neighbor, have lost all interest in our welfare? Their translation from earth to heaven cannot have made them indifferent to the miseries of their brethren on earth. We honor them by asking them to present our petitions to the same God, we and they adore. Can it be that they would reject our petitions and remain cold and unresponsive?

The next number will teach us that we on earth, destined and hoping for the same happiness as the saints already enjoy, belong with them to the same communion of saints, which comprises the faithful on earth, the blessed spirits in heaven and the suffering souls of Purgatory. This union gives us a new claim to the intercession of the saints; for all the members of a community are entitled to some benefits accruing from their common membership, and we cannot participate in anything that belongs to the saints, save in their prayers before the throne of God, and in their superabundant merits.

2. We come now to the second condition, the express will of God, Whom the saints and we worship. He is, as we have seen, favorable to the honor rendered to His friends; and as with Him no service is left unrewarded, we may expect that we shall not address our prayers to the saints in vain. Remember also the zeal of the Saviour for the salvation of souls: He literally thirsted for it, and now that He has accomplished the work of our Redemption by the shedding of His precious blood, He cannot but desire ardently to deal out with a liberal hand the abundant merits of His passion. "Ask and you shall receive," but we shall receive with a greater abundance, when the friends and favorites of the King of kings join their prayers with ours, for He makes them the participants and distributors of His infinite riches. As the saints see God face to face, their souls are also inflamed with

zeal for the honor and glory of God, and we may safely conclude that they do all what is in their power to procure for us the graces to lead holy lives, in order that by serving and honoring God upon earth, we may deserve to glorify Him together with them in heaven for all eternity.

328. How are the saints and we members of the same Church?

The saints and we are members of the same Church, because the Church in heaven and the Church on earth are one and the same Church and all its members are in communion with one another.

The union that exists between the rational creatures of God upon earth and the blessed spirits in heaven, springs from their common Head, and that Head is Christ. It is from the Head that the supernatural life flows which unites with a common bond all the members into one community. All on earth are called to the life of grace, and in that sense even infidels and heretics are potentially, but not actually, united with Christ, the Head. There is a possible community of interests between all rational creatures of God upon earth, because all receive sufficient graces to save their souls, and in this comprehensive and wide sense, the rebel angels and the damned are alone excluded from the union, whose members are all under one Head, Christ Jesus our Lord. (Cf. St. Thos. P. III, q. 8, a. 1, 3).

In a stricter sense, the Church of Christ upon earth comprise all those who from the beginning were not only called, but, either through faith in Christ to come or through faith in Him after His coming, were made partakers of the fruits of the Redemption and of His supernatural life. Hence, the primitive Church under the Patriarchs, the Mosaic Church, which began with the promulgation of the law on Mount Sinai and lasted until Christ, and the Christian Church under the law of Grace, are one and the same Church.

Now, we may be actually identified with the Church and be united with Christ in three different ways: through faith, through charity and through actual or prospective fruition of eternal

glory. The first two ways correspond to the faithful on earth, or to the members of the Catholic Church, and the last to the saints of heaven and to the souls in Purgatory. Purgatory is only a transitory state of purification for admission into glory: the holy souls are only temporarily kept back from the actual sight of God. The members of the Church on earth belong to the militant Church; those in Purgatory are the suffering Church; and those united to Christ in glory make up the triumphant Church. Among the members of the Church on earth, there are some who are united only by faith, and they participate in the life of Christ by believing what He has taught; but those united to Christ by charity, or sanctifying grace, are perfectly united to the Head by works as well as by faith. (Cf. Trent, Sess. 6 c. 7). The union of the Church militant with the Church triumphant and with the suffering Church, through the headship of Christ, necessarily implies a common interest, a true community, as explained in the next three numbers.

329. What is the communion of the members of the Church called?

The communion of the members of the Church is called the Communion of Saints.

330. What does the Communion of Saints mean?

The Communion of Saints means the union which exists between the members of the Church on earth with one another, and with the blessed in heaven, and with the suffering souls in Purgatory.

It is evident from the answer in these two numbers that the catechism includes in the Communion of Saints, all those who have been baptized and by faith at least belong to the militant Church, or actually belong to the true Church on earth, as well as all the souls in Purgatory and all the blessed in heaven. This conclusion is based upon the doctrine laid down in No. 328. There we learned that there are three places where the saints dwell: heaven, Purgatory and this earth; hence the militant Church on earth, the suffering Church in Purgatory and the triumphant Church in heaven form together the Communion of Saints. But how can mem-

bers of the Catholic Church be called saints, when there are so many sinners among them? For the same reason that the Catholic Church is called holy. New York, Washington and San Francisco are American cities; yet that does not mean that all the people living there are Americans, but that the largest number are so, and that the laws which govern the people are American laws, and that all the inhabitants of these cities are subject to the American Government. The Church alone has the true dispensation of sanctifying and life-giving Sacraments. There are Sacraments instituted by Christ for all conditions of life, and the graces received by them procure all the means necessary and useful to become truly holy. The mission of the Church is one of holiness. Does she not continually teach holiness? Does not her doctrine, the doctrine of Christ, lead to holiness? Does not she, whenever occasion presents itself, propose for her members the imitation of Christ, and of the saints, now in the triuphant Church, as the rule of their conduct? Finally, she is holy in her Head, Christ, Who has founded the Church and has sent the Holy Ghost to abide with her and to keep her holy until her mission is accomplished at the end of the world.

The souls in Purgatory, or the suffering Church, belong to the Communion of Saints, because Purgatory is the state in which those souls suffer for a time who have died guilty of venial sin, or without having satisfied for the punishment due to their forgiven mortal or venial sins. It is not a place of a permanent but of a transitory nature, for the souls who enter therein are after a certain time to be incorporated with the saints in heaven. They have died in the state of grace; they are incapable of sinning any more; and they are kept from the Beatific Vision in heaven, only because the justice of God does not allow the smallest stain on the souls that appear in His presence: nothing defiled can enter heaven.

Finally, there is the triumphant Church, in which

alone perfect sanctity is to be found; for there the souls participate in some way in God's divine perfections and, therefore, participate in His infinite sanctity and holiness. Heaven is a state of everlasting life, in which we see God face to face, are made like unto Him in glory and enjoy eternal happiness.

Now what is common to the three, the militant, the suffering and the triumphant Churches, to make them one Communion of Saints? It is nothing else but charity, the life-giving grace or supernatural life infused into the soul by the Holy Ghost through the merits of the Saviour, the real Head of the Communion of Saints, of Whose life we participate through sanctifying grace. The saints in heaven are clothed with it as with a garment in which to assist at the perpetual wedding-feast; the saints in Purgatory are invested with it, although some stain, which prevents the possessors from entering into the joyful feast, must first be removed through suffering; and the saints on earth, who are united to Christ by charity, are also clothed with the same garment of sanctifying grace, which they must preserve unsullied and unstained until death. Even the sinner in the militant Church, who has temporarily lost his robe of innocence, may, by the mercy of God, find it again in the life-giving Sacraments, as long as faith and hope remain alive in his soul. They are, as the Angelic Doctor expresses it, like dead members in the human body; but they may be revived unless cut off through the loss of faith, through schism or excommunication, when it will require a miracle of grace, a miracle greater than the creation of the world, to bring them back into the fold, or, to make use of the same comparison, to unite the severed member again with the mystical body of Christ.

331. What benefits are derived from the Communion of Saints?

The following benefits are derived from the Communion of Saints: the faithful on earth assist one another by their prayers and good works, and they are aided by the intercession of the saints in heaven, while both the saints in heaven and the faithful on earth help the souls in Purgatory.

The faithful on earth assist one another by their prayers and good works. In the militant Church there is a communion of interests, for all the members thereof

participate in all the Sacrifices of the Mass, in other public devotions of whatever nature, such as Vespers, public Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, funerals, public processions, ets., as well as in all the prayers and good works whether done in public or in private by the faithful in the state of grace. By prayers we understand, not only the prayers said publicly, like the holy office sung in the churches, but also the offices recited by priests or religious in the name of the Church, and all other supplications addressed to Heaven by any member of the Church who is in the state of grace. By good works we mean all those done in the state of grace, in conformity with the will of God, and especially those works which are only recommended by God but not imposed upon us, such as the evangelical counsels, penances, mortifications, and all that is done for the love of God, like corporal and spiritual works of mercy, the complying of the duties of our state of life, or, in one word, all that is said or done which is worthy of a heavenly reward. This excludes the private prayers and good works done in the state of mortal sin, for no matter how good such works may be in themselves, and although they may obtain the grace of conversion for the sinner, they are lost and lost for ever to him as well as to the Communion of Saints.

If the Church teaches that the faithful on earth assist one another by their prayers and good works, it must not be understood that all participate equally in the merits of the public and private prayers and good works performed by others, for the share received by each member depends on the more or less perfect disposition of each individual; and hence the most pious and devoted souls receive the greater share, as they are more particularly loved by God. They receive every day additional graces to advance towards perfection, together with an increase of sanctifying grace; whilst sinners may obtain not only sufficient help, but even efficacious graces towards their conversion.

The faithful on earth are aided by the intercession of the saints and by the superabundant merits of their good works performed whilst on earth.

It must be held as a doctrine of the Church, that (a) the

saints in heaven cannot increase their merit or their happiness, for the time of meriting ceased with their death; (b) their merits cannot be applied to us, unless they have superabundant merits, or more merit than was needed to satisfy for their own sins; (c) they cannot apply their superabundant merits to any particular member on earth without the consent of their Head, Who is Christ, the Source of all merit; (d) all the superabundant merits of the saints are united to the infinite merits of Jesus, our Saviour, and make up that inexhaustible treasure which He confided to the Supreme Head of the Church on earth, His Vicar, with the power to attach them to some good thought, word or deed, making our good deeds more meritorious than they are actually in themselves. The Pope of Rome, the Vicar of Christ upon earth, dispenses of the superabundant merits of the saints and of the infinite merits of the Saviour in the form of indulgences. (Cf. No. 231-237). In order that the superabundant merits of the saints may be still better understood, it is necessary to bear in mind that any good action performed in the state of grace, has four supernatural fruits: it obtains new actual graces; it increases sanctifying grace in the soul, together with an aptitude and strength to perform good actions corresponding to the virtue previously practiced; it takes away the guilt of venial sin by the infusion of grace; and, lastly, it satisfies for the temporal punishment due to past sins. The members of the Church militant cannot participate in the first three fruits of the saints in Heaven, because the three fruits are entirely personal and were produced effectively at the time the good work was done. The faithful on earth, when in the state of grace, participate in the good works done by the saints of heaven, whilst the latter were still living; but now only the merit of satisfaction for sins remain, and in this the faithful on earth may participate, provided the merits of the saints were more than sufficient to satisfy for their own sins.

For whom do the saints in heaven intercede? The will of God is in this regard undoubtedly paramount and supreme; but as God wishes His saints to be honored, and sometimes grants, at their request, what otherwise He would not bestow, we may safely conclude that the greatest aid will come to us from those saints, whose intercession the faithful on earth have implored; and this is especially to be held true of the Blessed Virgin, whom her divine Son honored as His Mother while on earth, and whose dignity and power is now so exalted,

that the Church worships her and venerates her as the Queen of Angels and Saints in the heavenly paradise. The clients of Mary, according to the opinions of the most pious and learned men, are sure of a most powerful patroness in Heaven, and a filial devotion to the Mother of Jesus is a most certain sign of predestination.

But what advantage do the saints of heaven reap from the Communion of Saints? It is clear that neither we nor the souls in Purgatory can add to their happiness; but we honor them when we ask them to intercede for us and this honor and praise we give them, being acceptable to God, is therefore also agreeable to them. God demands our supreme worship, although we cannot add anything to His glory: all we can give Him is a relative honor that in no wise can increase God's essential glory, which is infinite, but which is advantageous to us, for we thereby perform a duty which God necessarily demands of us, and we increase thereby also our personal merits. Likewise, when we honor the saints in heaven, we honor God in His saints, and this act of honor redounds to our own good, as we gain thereby intercessors before the throne of God as well as an increase of grace and merit.

Both the saints in heaven and the faithful on earth help the souls in Purgatory. Here two truths are advanced: one, that the saints in heaven help the souls in Purgatory, and the second, that the faithful on earth help the suffering souls. That the saints in heaven help the souls in Purgatory is a probable opinion. But the justice of God must be satisfied, and it is not altogether clear that the saints, who cannot merit any more for themselves, can satisfy for the souls in Purgatory by good deeds performed by them whilst they were still in the flesh; still the authority of the learned men who have held this opinion, should not be lightly set aside. After all, it is only a speculative truth, and not very practical, unless the faithful on earth implore the saints, and above all the Mother of God, to intercede for the suffering souls. Until the Church decides the question, we may dismiss it without further comment. The case is entirely different with our satisfaction for the sins of the souls in Purgatory. It is meritorious for the faithful to pray for the dead, and to offer their good works,

especially the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, for the suffering souls: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from sins." (2 Mach. xii. 46). The Council of Trent only teaches that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls detained therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but especially by the acceptable Sacrifice of the Altar. (Sess. 6, Can. 30). Calvin called the Catholic doctrine of praying for the dead the damnable invention of Satan, and his opinion is shared by almost all Protestants, Anglicans excepted. It is admitted in the Oxford Tract No. 79, p. 39, that the African Church, even in the remote time of Tertullian and St. Cyprian, held the same doctrine as that of the Roman Church of to-day. Again, the belief of the Greek Church agrees with the doctrine of the Catholic Church and with its practices, as is evident from the teachings of St. Cyril of Jerusalem and of all the Greek doctors after him; and, therefore, there is no need of insisting further on this point.

Several practical questions now demand an explanation: 1. Is it allowed to ask the intercession of the holy souls in Purgatory? The Church does not formally approve or disapprove of it, and therefore it is left to each one's judgment and inclination; but it is certain that owing to their state of purgation, their intercession is less valuable to us than that of the saints.

2. Is it advisable to offer up all the fruits of all our good actions, prayers, indulgences and sacrifices in aid of the souls in Purgatory? It has been said already that to every good action performed in the state of grace, four fruits are attached: a right to new actual graces, an increase of sanctifying grace, which also remits venial sin, and makes satisfaction for sins committed and not fully satisfied for. (St. Thos. Supp. P. III, q. 71, a. 1, 4). The last fruit is the only one that can be offered for the relief of the holy souls, either to shorten their detention in Purgatory, or to diminish their sufferings. By offering to God in favor of the holy souls all satisfaction available for the remission of the temporal punishments due to our own sins, we make an heroic offering, and the act is called the Heroic Act. Let it be understood, however, that the Holy Father generally reserves from the Heroic Act the plenary indulgence granted at the moment of our death. Neither are

all indulgences applicable to the souls in Purgatory, but only those that are granted with the clause "applicable to the souls in Purgatory." By exception, nevertheless, all indulgences are applicable to the souls in Purgatory, when one has made the Heroic Act.

The Heroic Act in favor of the souls detained in Purgatory is advisable to those who fully understand it, because it is an act of heroic brotherly love, second only to the charity of reclaiming sinners from their evil ways and of instructing many unto justice; but it should not be urged upon any one. Besides being an act of charity, and therefore most pleasing to God, it is certain to bring us several intercessors before the throne of God, as soon as these holy souls will be delivered from their prison of suffering and torture, even if we do not hold the opinion that the souls in Purgatory are able to help us, whilst satisfying for their own sins.

3. Although we may transfer to the living that fruit of our good actions which consists in the remission of temporal punishments due to sin, this is rarely advisable, unless the person to whom we wish to apply the merit of our satisfactions be in great danger of death, and we are morally certain that he is in the state of grace; and this for obvious reasons, for one in the state of mortal sin, not being able to satisfy personally for the punishment due to his own sins, cannot satisfy for them through others, and if he is not in any danger of death, it is more salutary for him that he make personal satisfaction. In such a case, it is more advisable to offer the good works which charity prompts us to perform for our neighbor as a supplication to Our Lord to grant him the graces he may need, for thus the charity that accompanies our good works will become a powerful means of intercession before the throne of Mercy.

4. Although a person in mortal sin cannot perform any good work that is meritorious for himself or for others, nevertheless, if the sinner is instrumental in bringing about an action meritorious in itself, the good work will always bring forth fruit: a sinner may, for instance, have prayers said in Church for the living or the dead, he may have Masses said for the souls in Purgatory, he may in his will leave pious bequests for the same purpose; in all such cases, what is done in the name of the Church, even if the celebrant himself were a sinner, will bring forth fruit. (St. Thos., Supp., P. III(q. 71, a. 3 c.)

332. Does the first commandment forbid us to honor relics?

The first commandment does not forbid us to honor relics, because relics are the bodies of the saints or objects directly connected with them or with Our Lord.

In this answer, we have the reason why it is not forbidden to honor relics. In a strict sense, relics are the remains of the bodies of the saints, their ashes, their bones, etc., and in a wider or secondary sense, they include all that belonged to them and all that is by itself apt to bring back to our mind their memory and their deeds.

The Council of Trent, Sess. 25, declares the veneration of ashes and other relics of the saints pious and licit, and in its Profession of Faith, it requires that relics of saints be venerated. Ecclesiastical history tells us that the first who impugned the primitive custom of honoring the relics of the martyrs was Vigilantius in the fifth century. St. Jerome championed the cause of the Church and of the martyrs. The innovators of the sixteenth century resusciated the heresy, and won in this as in many other things, the unenviable fame of Protestants. The desecration of the relics of saints, and the excesses committed in many countries upon the introduction of Protestantism, dishonor the so-called reformers, for, obsessed by a diabolical hatred, they trampled the relics under their feet, scattered them to the winds, and destroyed the costly reliquaries in which they were kept. These sacrileges were repeated frequently by the French revolutionists in their hatred of God and of all that is holy: only educated savages, possessed by a diabolical rage, are capable of such atrocities.

The Old and New Testaments favor the veneration of relics: The body of a dead man, when thrown on the bones of Prophet Eliseus in his sepulchre, came to life (4 Kings, xiii. 21); a woman with an issue of blood was healed by touching the hem of the Saviour's garment (Matt. ix. 20); handkerchiefs and aprons brought from the body of St. Paul cured the sick

and expelled the devil (Acts, xix. 11); even St. Peter's shadow cured all those who had been brought where St. Peter had to pass. (Acts, v. 15, 16).

The tradition of the early Church regarding the veneration of relics has continued to our day in all the churches of Christendom, a fact which proves undeniably that the uninterrupted custom is apostolic in its origin. We have already seen that the early Christians were wont to offer up the Holy Sacrifice on the tomb of the martyrs; later on, when peace was restored to the Church, the holy relics were often divided among new churches which had sprung up. This custom is still preserved, for all our altar-stones still have a sepulchre-like cavity, in which the bishop, in the ceremony of consecration of altar-stones, deposits a few relics of saints and then seals the little pit with a kind of tiny slab of marble. This cherished practice also comes to us from the first centuries of the Christian era.

We need not wonder then that Eusebius, the historian, relates of the wooden chair of St. James, that it was carefully kept and held in high esteem, that the Church of Smyrna, in its celebrated Epistle, speaks of the bones of St. Polycarp, its first bishop, as dear as precious stones, and that they were placed in a suitable spot, where it was hoped to celebrate his anniversary amid a large concourse of people; either should we wonder reading in the acts of the martyrdom of St. Ignatius, a successor of St. Peter in the See of Antioch that the more durable parts of the martyr's relics were preserved, sent from Rome to Antioch and held as an inestimable treasure ieft to the Church. St. Jerome, who has been quoted above, has this remarkable passage in his book in which he defends the veneration of relics against Vinantius: "If Vinantius is in the right," he says, "then the Emperor Constantine was sacrilegious, when he transferred the holy relics of Andrew, Luke and Timothy to Constantinople." He goes on to say that in his time the Emperor Arcadius transferred the relics of the Prophet Samuel from Judea to Thrace: he would then also be an idol-worshipper. After this we should note the many miracles performed at the tombs of the martyrs and saints, as reported by St. Augustine and Orosius, especially those which occurred when a portion of the relics of St. Stephen were brought from Palestine to Africa. To this can be added the miraculous liquidation of the blood of St. Januarius, when placed near his head on his feast day in Naples, and the many bodies of saints miraculously preserved from corruption, of St. Margaret of Cortona, St. Catherine of Bologna, St. Rose of Viterba, St. Clare of Monte Falco, St. Philip Neri and St. Francis Xavier. The body of this great missionary of India, preserved in Goa, is exposed only at cer-

tain intervals, but the other preserved bodies can be seen by any one who visits their shrines, and any priest or religious is even allowed to touch the cheeks or hands of St. Catherine of Bologna.

Those that inveigh against the honor paid to the relics of saints, frequently justify it by their own practice, for we find that almost every family cherishes keepsakes and heirlooms coming from their ancestors; and as to the ashes and bones of saints and martyrs, let us conclude with the Council of Trent, that "the bodies of the holy martyrs and the sacred bodies of others now living with Christ should be honored by the faithful, because they were Christ's living members and the temples of the Holy Ghost, to be by Him resuscitated to eternal life and to be glorified by Him, and because by them many favors are bestowed by God on man."

The bodies of saints and martyrs, according to the Fathers of the Council, were (a) companions of the saints' souls, now living with Christ; by honor shown the body, the soul its mistress, is also honored; (b) the bodies while alive were temples of the Holy Ghost, Who through the soul abided in them and manifested His power by the many and great graces He bestowed. Since the soul is in every part of the body, the operations of the Holy Ghost on the soul also quickened the body, of which the soul is the mistress; (c) they were living members of Christ's mystical body and therefore holy, by the heroic virtues they practiced together with the soul; (d) on the Day of Ressurection, when the soul will be again united to the body, they will be glorified; and (e) many miracles of temporal and spiritual favors have been bestowed upon the faithful who have venerated the relics of saints and martyrs, and of this we find numerous examples in the lives of the saints.

333. Does the first commandment forbid the making of images?

The first commandment does forbid the making of images if they are made to be adored as gods, but it does not forbid the making of them to put us in mind of Jesus Christ, His Blessed Mother, and the saints.

This and the three following numbers are closely

related and depend on one another. Two primary questions are included in the four numbers: Is the use of pictures and images allowed? and, What advantages are derived from it? The first commandment after prohibiting the worship of false gods, adds: "Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of anything. . . . Thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them." Mohammedans proscribe sculpture, engraving, carving and painting or any representation of anything, as opposed to the law of God revealed to Mohammed; and as they recognize Moses as a great prophet, they rely also on the first commandment to corroborate their belief. Many heretics, and among them several Protestant sects, follow them closely, and condemn Catholics for their superstitious use, as they call it, of statues, paintings, pictures and images; and, therefore, they make two commandments of the first, as we have already noted, in order to find an argument for their opinion. The Catholic Church defends the proper use of religious statues, pictures and images, and maintains that the first commandment forbids the making of sculptural or pictorial representations of anything existing if made for the purpose of adoring them or paying them divine honors, as idol-worshippers do. But the Church affirms that God does not forbid the making of them or their use, if they be intended to put us in mind of Jesus Christ, His Blessed Mother and the saints.

After explaining the doctrine of the Church, we will show that it is reasonable and praiseworthy, as well as advantageous, to honor pictures and images in accordance with Catholic practice.

The Council of Trent clearly explains the doctrine of the Catholic Church on this subject: "Images . . . of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God and of other saints should be placed and kept especially in the temples, and due honor and veneration should be given them, not because it is believed there is anything divine or any power in them for which they should be worshipped, or for which something should be asked of them, or for which trust should be placed in them, as was done formally by the people who placed their hope in idols, but because the honor that is shown them refers to the prototypes

which they represent; so that when we reverence images, and uncover our heads, and prostrate ourselves before them, we adore Christ and venerate the saints whose representations they are." (Sess. 25).

If we should accept the theory of some heretics, who claim that God in the first Commandment forbade the making of images, then God was very inconsistent when He ordered, shortly after proclaiming the Decalogue, the making of a brazen serpent to heal the people from the bite of fiery serpents (Num. xxi. 6-9), and again when, by His order, two cherubim of beaten gold, with wings extended, were placed over the oracle. (Exod. xxv. 18-20). True, the use of images is a matter of discipline and their veneration is not commanded; it would indeed be forbidden by the Church, if there were any danger of idolatry, as there certainly was, when nearly all the people of the world worshipped idols and put their trust in them. It was for this reason that religious statues and pictures did not come into general use until idolatry was finally overthrown and the danger of idolatrous worship was removed. At the end of the seventh century of the Christian era, sacred images, called icons by the Greeks, were in use in all the churches in Christendom, and when the Emperor Leo the Isaurian, who reigned in Constantinople in the beginning of the eighth century, began his sacrilegious war against images and ordered that they be removed from the churches, his subjects rebelled against him and the internecine feud lasted more than a hundred years. In the East as well as in the West there arose many defenders of the Catholic doctrine and practice, and among them the great Doctor, St. John Damascene. This apologist of the apostolic tradition, which the Iconoclasts tried to destroy by breaking and burning the sacred images, appealed to the teachings of the early Church. St. Gregory II and other Roman Pontiffs, his immediate successors, valiantly upheld the cause of Christianity, and the victory finally remained with the champions of the faith.

St. Basil had already written in the fourth century: "The forms of their (the saints') images I honor and venerate openly. What has been delivered to us by the holy Apostles should not be prohibited, but we erect their monuments in all our churches." The ancient custom to represent our Saviour under the form and figure of the Good Shepherd, is well known, and an image of the Blessed Virgin with the divine Infant, painted on glass, and assigned, as to its origin, to the third century, is still preserved; but why insist on a custom so natural and so much in keeping with the veneration we bestow on the paintings or photographs of persons dear to us?

334. Is it allowed to pray to the crucifix or to the images and relics of the saints?

It is not allowed to pray to the crucifix or images and relics of the saints, for they have no life nor power to help nor sense to hear us.

It is evident that if any one should pay any honor or worship to statues or creatures as such, or ask of them any favors, it would be monstrous idolatry, for statues, pictures or other representations have no life or power to help us, nor sense to hear us; and to attribute to them that power and to honor them as the source of that power, is pure fetischism, the lowest grade of superstition. David, when comparing the God of the Jews with the gods of idolatrous nations, beautifully expresses the same Catholic doctrine, laid down here in the catechism: "Our God is in heaven; He hath done all things whatsoever He would. The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the works of the hands of men. They have mouths and speak not: they have eyes and see not. They have ears, and hear not: they have noses and smell not. They have hands and feel not: they have feet and walk not: neither shall they cry through their throat. Let them that make them, become like unto them; and all such that trust in them." (Ps. cxiii).

It is needless to say that to-day, even a Catholic child of seven years, that has ever attended a Catholic school or a catechism class, knows that statues and images have no life, and that it is forbidden and idolatrous to pray to them as if they could hear or help us.

The case is a little different with regard to relics; we should not forget what has been said about the honor due to relics, as the material remains of the bodies of those who now in their spirit enjoy God in Heaven. We are not allowed to pray to relics, it is true, because being now inanimate and separate from the soul, they cannot hear us; but the ashes and bones of the saints may be honored, not simply as memorials or representations, but with a greater relative honor, for, as explained in a previous number, they are the remains of the bodies that were once the temples of the Holy Ghost; they had a share in the merits of the saints' souls as their instruments;

those very ashes will on the day of the general resurrection live again and be reunited to their souls, become spiritual, shine with a supernatural beauty, be clothed with immortality and impassibility and be finally endowed with two other gifts, now proper to a spirit, viz., agility and subtility, so as not to be a hindrance to the flight of the soul. Even God Himself has honored the relics of saints by working many miracles in their presence; nevertheless, we should not separate the honor of these material remains from the souls of the saints now in heaven, but refer the principal honor to those blissful spirits, whose instruments their bodies were during their holy lives on earth, for thus we glorify God in His saints. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 25, a. 6, o.) This doctrine is supported by the practice of the Church in instituting feasts and approving devotions in honor of many relics, such as the feast of the holy cross, on May the third, of the nails, of the lance, of the crown of thorns, and the feast in honor of the relics which are kept in parochial and cathedral churches, celebrated on the fifth of November.

335. Is it right to show respect to the pictures and images of Christ and His saints?

It is right to show respect to the pictures and images of Christ and His saints because they are the representations and memorials of them.

We have seen that the first commandment does not forbid the making of images, and if the respect shown to them is only relative, i. e., if by the respect shown them we mean to honor Christ and His saints, this relative veneration to any representation of Christ, of angels and saints, cannot but be acceptable to God. The Council of Trent, cited in number 333, does not teach us that we are bound to venerate the images and pictures of Christ and His saints, but approves of it and exhorts us to place them especially in our churches, where due honor and veneration may be given them. If we are asked what honor and veneration we can bestow on religious statues and pictures, we answer that we are allowed to venerate them, as we should the prototypes or the persons they represent. Saints are honored with an absolute veneration or woship, called "dulia," and statues and paintings of them, with the same relative ven-

eration, for the veneration of the latter does not rest with the images themselves, but is bestowed on the prototypes. For the same reason we must give to the statues and paintings of the Blessed Virgin, the relative worship of "hyperdulia," and to the statues, engravings and paintings of our Blessed Lord the relative worship of "latria," or of supreme worship. The following number will show the advantages derived from the use of sacred images, and they more than anything else will convince us that it is right and commendable to show respect to them.

336. Why do we pray before the crucifix and the images and relics of the saints?

We pray before the crucifix and the images and the relics of the saints, because they enliven our devotion by exciting pious affections and desires, and by reminding us of Christ and of the saints, that we may imitate their virtues.

Our catechisms, following St. Thomas, commonly give four reasons why images of Christ and of the saints are used in the Church: 1st, to instruct the unlearned, for to them they are as books; 2nd, to aid our memory of things spiritual, for, whilst images daily represent before our eyes the mysteries of the Incarnation and the examples of Christ and of the saints, the lessons they teach will be more securely retained in our memory; 3rd, to excite in us affections of devotion, for we are moved more by things seen than by things heard; and 4th, because they are useful to prevent distraction. In other words: (a) images and pictures effectively teach those who cannot read and the little ones whose mind is not fully developed. This is admitted by all parents and teachers, and our own experience confirms it. (b) They are useful to all, as they refresh our memory of the mysteries of the Incarnation, birth, life and death of our Saviour, and of the holy lives of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints. Every truth rep-

resented by them before our eyes, will be more indelibly engraved upon our memory than by mere words or oral teaching; and explanations or exhortations given in the sight of the image seem to cluster around it and make a deeper impression. Thus in the reconstruction of the picture, all the truths and circumstances that it teaches are represented again to our mind. (c) Images and other representations of holy things will again and again excite in the beholder a variety of pious affections, such as sentiments of gratitude or love of virtue, of thanksgiving, of holy desires or salutary fears, of sorrow for sin, of lively faith, of firm hope or of ardent love for God, etc., according to the representations in the image. An "Ecce Homo," a crucifix, a "Mater Dolorosa," a Sacred Heart with encircling crown, with gaping wounds and cross amidst flames of fire, were and always are books of meditation for the most learned saints. St. Paul esteemed all knowledge as nothing, when compared with the simple knowledge of Jesus crucified. The sacred image of his dying Saviour must have been familiar to him and deeply impressed on his mind, and there he studied it, meditated upon it, and found in it strength, courage, and that heroic love of God and neighbor, which enabled him to overcome all obstacles, made him glory in His sufferings and openly proclaim that he wished to be anathema for the sake of Christ. (d) Since man's senses are his means of communication with the outside world, i. e., with things around him, these material things make a more vivid impression on his mind than abstract spiritual truths; and so to guard against the distractions of our mind, caused by the constant changes around us and the impressions they make upon us, we use sensible things with a spiritual meaning to drive material things from our mind; and if distractions force themselves upon us, a little good will on our part will easily dislodge the intruders, if we revert to the image or to the scene that put us in mind of Christ, His Blessed Mother

and the saints. It is for the same reason that in our meditations, we are advised to represent to our mind a scene appropriate to the meditation, and to it we turn back when we are assailed by distractions.

We can now understand the answer of the catechism when it teaches us that crucifixes, images and relics of the saints enliven our devotion, which is a prompt will to give ourselves up to those occupations that concern the will of God (Cf. St. Thos., II. 2, q. 82, a. 1, 2). For devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the saints ultimately ends and culminates in devotion to God, Whose servants they are. Habitual devotion in God's service finally leads to conformity in all things to the will of God, which is nothing else than the practice of perfect charity.

Now, what causes true devotion? The pious affections and desires of the heart moved by the consideration of God's infinite perfections and above all of His bounty and mercy towards us in spite of our worldliness, our ingratitude and our wickedness. Holy pictures and sacred statues furnish us food for serious thought, which moves the heart; and these movements of the heart stir up sorrow for the past and a holy determination of amendment. Representations of scenes in our Lord's life and in the lives of saints remind us that we should imitate the virtues of our Master and Teacher, of His Blessed Mother and of all those who have followed in His footsteps. (Cf. St. Thos., l. c., a. 3).

Let us remark in conclusion that although there is no commandment that obliges us to honor relics and sacred images, it is nevertheless sinful and sacrilegious to show irreverence to them or desecrate them. Besides no Catholic home ought to be without a crucifix and a statue or picture of the Blessed Virgin, and the best room of the house and the most honorable place in the room should be reserved for them.

Indifferent Catholics are sometimes ashamed to hang a crucifix or a picture of the Blessed Mother in their parlor or reception room. There may sometimes be a reason to reserve such marks of devotion to private rooms, if there be fear of contempt from intolerant visitors; but is it not too often done for want of faith or courage to acknowledge the true religion? We have more need to be reminded by means of holy pictures of what Jesus, our Saviour accomplished for our sake, of the part His Blessed Mother had in the Redemption, and of the saints' holy lives, than to be reminded of the deeds of our ancestors, relations and friends, whose paintings and photographs adorn the walls of many reception rooms.

The Church has left a great latitude to the inventive

genius and lofty conceptions of artists in the choice of ideals for their statues, paintings and engravings; and when the greatest painters were not only men of sound faith, but devout Catholics, their genius was devoted to transferring to their canvas, or to their blocks of wood and marble the most sublime truths of the Catholic religion. Ours, however, is not the age of faith, and we sometimes see pictures which do not conform to the truth. Images should be simple and clear, as well as instructive; they should represent either some event in the life of the Saviour or some heroic deed which merited for the saints the honor of our altars, and this should be done in a vivid manner that will indelibly imprint the representations and their meaning on the beholder's memory. The sacred image should, besides, be of such a nature as to move the heart to appropriate sentiments and pious affections tending to real devotion, the ultimate end of the veneration of all sacred images. If some pictures or images seem to be somewhat obscure in their meaning, a text of Holy Scripture will often remove the objectionable feature and add greatly to the efficacy of the representation.

LESSON THE THIRTY-SECOND

FROM THE SECOND TO THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

337. What is the second commandment?

The second commandment is: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

God has willed that we should live a social life, not only for the preservation of the race, but for the welfare and comfort of each individual, by the maintenance of order in society. To this end all human laws are properly directed. But man must also tend towards his ultimate end, God, and to attain that end a Christian society is required with union among its members. Hence, some precepts refer to man's duties towards God, and some refer to his obligations towards his co-religionists, who with him form the Christian society. Our duties towards God are enjoined by the first three commandments. Now in order to secure the worship which

is directly commanded in the first precept, two obstacles have first to be removed, because they are two impediments to the proper worship of God, viz., worship of false gods and irreverence for the holy name of God. (Cf. St. Thos., II. 2, q. 122, a. 2, 3). The truth that all the commandments are both affirmative and negative, has been fully explained before. Therefore, when this second commandment forbids the taking of the name of God in vain, we are at the same time commanded to reverence that holy name. Yet this affirmative commandment does not oblige at all times, as is evident when we consider that we are not bound to invoke the name of God constantly; but it prohibits at all times and in all places any irreverence to the holy name of God.

At first sight it would seem that this commandment is already contained in the first; therefore, why should a second commandment be given to observe what is already commanded? It is true that the first commandment obliges us to honor and to serve God alone, and to the worship and service of God undoubtedly belongs reverence for Him and for His names, by which He is designated and known to us. But the duty is of so much importance, and there are so many ways of dishonoring the holy names of God, and the sins committed against the reverence due to the holy names of God, are so common, that a special and separate commandment is very useful and even necessary.

What is to be understood by the name of God? By it is meant any name by which God is designated, as Jehovah, the Lord, the Creator, the Almighty, the All-wise, the All-holy, the Blessed Trinity, the Three Divine Persons, the Messiah, the Word, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, the Supreme Judge, the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, the Sacred Heart, etc. We must also include as forbidden by the second commandment the vain use of the names of the angels and saints, the messengers or friends of God, of the Blessed Virgin, the Virgin Mother, the Immaculate, etc.; also of the Holy Scriptures and the texts thereof, as inspired by God; of heaven as the place where God dwells, etc. But let it be observed that irreverence for the holy names of God is greater than irreverence for the names of the saints, unless irreverence for God be thereby intended.

338. What are we commanded by the second commandment?

We are commanded by the second commandment to speak with reverence of God and of the saints, and of all holy things and to keep our lawful oaths and vows.

We are commanded to speak with reverence not only of God, but of all persons and things in any way dear to or connected with God. Among the persons dear to God are His angels and saints, and His ministers and all religious persons of either sex, who have dedicated their lives to God; also all things and places that are consecrated to God, and of which mention was made when sacrilege was considered in connection with the preceding commandment.

Reverence for the holy names of God is enjoined and we can show it in many ways: 1st, when we openly and confidently confess Him to be our Lord and Master, and Christ to be our Redeemer and Teacher; 2nd, when we honor God's will, His laws and precepts, or reverence Christ's holy doctrine, as taught by the Church or contained in Holy Scripture; 3rd, when we make His will the subject of our serious consideration and meditation; 4th, when we praise Him or thank Him for all He has done for us; 5th, when we praise Him, extolling His wisdom, power and fidelity; 6th, when with good reason and the deepest reverence, we call upon the name of the Lord to witness the truth of what we say; and 7th, when by a vow we promise sincerely to do what is acceptable to God. The Psalms of David and other parts of Holy Scripture are an inexhaustible source of all manners of honoring God's name with the most pious sentiments of devotion.

339. What is an oath?

An oath is the calling upon God to witness the truth of what we say.

If all people were truthful, there would be no necessity for an oath, for St. John Chrysostom rightly remarks: "Oaths were introduced among men, not at the beginning of the world, but long after; when vice had spread over the earth . . . ., then it was that God was appealed to as a witness of the truth, when, considering to what depth of perfidy and wickedness most people

had fallen, it was with difficulty that man could be induced to credit the simple assertion of his fellow-man."

John Wicliff taught that oaths are illicit, if they are taken to strengthen human contracts and civil dealings. This propostion in its general sense was condemned in the Council of Constance. From this censure we conclude that, considered in itself, an oath is licit and lawful; for, says St. Thomas, "this is evident from its origin and its end. What is its origin, but the faith of man who believes that God is infallible and has a knowledge of all things, and its end is to justify man and to settle controversies." (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 89, a. 2).

Holy Scripture also approves of oaths, when it says: "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy Lord . . . . and thou shalt swear by His name. " (Deut. vi. 13). When our Saviour warns His hearers: "I say to you, do not swear at all," (Matt. v. 34) He does not condemn the use, but the abuse of swearing because of its great frequency or the habit of it; for frequency breeds a habit and a habit leads to perjury. (St. Thos., l. c.) Finally the licitness of an oath is proved by the practice of the Church, which not only tolerates it, but even demands it of her ministers, when certain offices are bestowed upon them, and of witnesses in ecclesiastical trials. According to the definition of an oath given in the catechism, it is the calling of God as a witness of the truth of what we say; therefore, (a) an assertion must be made in words, in writing or by a sign or a nod; (b) there must be an explicit or implicit intention of calling God as a witness to the truth, also expressed in like manner. It is explicit when God is expressly mentioned, and implicit when instead of the name of God, some creature is mentioned that has a certain relation to God or His attributes, e. g., when one swears by the Gospel, the sacraments, heaven, the cross, the altar, etc. Such expressions as "by Jove," "by God," "as sure as I live," "God knows," "upon my word," "as sure as there is a God," "this is Gospel truth," are not oaths unless one intends them as such. Therefore, he that uses the name of God in a narrative form, merely takes the name of God in vain, which usually does not exceed a venial sin; and if what he says be untrue, he does not perjure himself.

340. When may we take an oath?

We may take an oath when it is ordered by lawful authority or required for God's honor or for our own or our neighbor's good.

An oath is an act of religion, and by it we honor God, provided it be lawful, i. e., provided we observe the

three conditions to make it licit, as we shall explain in the next number. Although we honor God by an oath, it does not follow that oaths can be taken without some good cause, for, in No. 339, we learned that frequent oaths lead to the habit, and the habit leads to the danger of swearing falsely. Now the catechism gives us the reasonable causes for taking an oath: viz., (a) when ordered by lawful authority, and by lawful authority is here meant the civil and the ecclesiastical authority, or all those who by the law of that land or of the Church are entitled to administer oaths; (b) when God's honor requires it. This would happen when a lay-person made under oath a statement that would prevent a sacrilegious Communion or an invalid marriage; (c) when the spiritual or temporal welfare of our neighbor requires it. A statement under oath may save an innocent person from punishment or may give a Catholic the right to receive the Sacraments, e. g., a man may swear that his friend is a single man, if the contrary cannot proved, to entitle him to the Sacrament of Matrimony; and (d) when an oath would tend to our own temporal or spiritual welfare, either to escape an unjust temporal or spiritual punishment or to remove an unjust obstacle to a spiritual or temporal advantage which one rightly desires.

Let it be remarked here that to swear truthfully without any just cause is not grievously dishonoring God, and therefore it does not exceed a venial sin: such a one acts with levity, and takes the name of God in vain, i. e., uselessly or inconsiderately.

341. What is necessary to make an oath lawful?

To make an oath lawful, it is necessary that what we swear to be true, and that there be a sufficient cause for taking an oath.

Following the explanation of St. Jerome on the text of Holy Scripture, "Thou shalt swear: As the Lord liveth in truth, and in judgment, and in justice," (Jer. iv. 2), St. Thomas, and all the Catholic theologians

after him, give three conditions to make an oath licit: judgment, truth, and justice.

1. Judgment. By judgment is meant discretion on the part of him who swears, for he who swears must act discreetly, i. e., no one should take an oath through levity or without a good cause, as we have explained in the preceding number, in answer to the question: "When may we take an oath?"

2. Truth. Moral certainty is required for the statement or assertion sworn to, and a mere probability is not sufficient. When some authors tell us that a mere probability, in the absence of any good contrary reason may be equivalent to a moral certainty, this should not be admitted in practice, especially in matters of facts or events: e. g., a man cannot swear that a friend of his is a widower, if he has only heard, through a third party, that his wife had died, nor assert under oath that a certain person is a single man, because he knew him as such, during a short acquaintance.

3. Justice. Justice refers to the licitness of the assertion or whether the assertion sworn to contains something prohibited or not.

He who swears to commit even a venial sin, or swears to neglect some duty with which he must comply under pain of venial sin only, commits, according to St. Liguori, a mortal sin; because such assertions and determination, although only trivial, become very grievous when God is called as a witness of one's evil intention or sinful desire. An indiscreet oath lacks judgment, a mendacious oath lacks truthfulness and a sinful or illicit oath lacks justice. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 89, a. 3, c).

What sin is it to swear without one of the three conditions? To swear without justice or just cause is only a venial sin; to swear without a moral certitude of the truth sworn to is mortal; and likewise, he that swears to commit a slight offense would be guilty of a mortal sin, unless ignorance or good faith excuse him, and the rea-

son therefore is that he is asking the all-holy God to corroborate his intention to offend Him, for by an oath man asks God to confirm the statement made.

There are several kinds of oaths according as they are attached to a simple assertion, and then they are called assertory; or attached to a promise, promissory; or to an execration or evil imprecation, execratory; or to a threat, comminatory, etc.

A promissory oath, if licit, must be kept, under pain of mortal sin, except if the promise is in favor of a person who does not accept it; but when the promise itself is sinful, the oath does not alter the morality of the promise, and it would be sinful to execute it. The oath as administered in our courts of justice is an execratory oath, for it virtually contains an imprecation; for after the usual formula of the oath, it ends with "so help me God," by which words he who takes an oath asks God to testify His disapproval by a punishment, if the oath be false. Expressions like the following: "may I die on the spot," or "the devil take me," "may I sink," etc., if the assertion is not true, are not considered real execratory oaths on account of the absence of the word "God," but are classed as low or vulgar only, unless he that utters them really and directly intends them as true oaths, by thinking of God and by calling Him as a witness to what is said.

A comminatory oath must be kept if attached to a threat which is in itself just and licit; but too often it is the outcome of an exasperated mind, and if a greater punishment is threatened than the case deserves, or the threat is caused by ill-will or hatred, such comminatory oaths are mortal sins, and he who executes them would commit a second mortal sin.

Is it allowed to feign an oath? i. e., is it licit to swear with the intention not to swear? It is not allowed, and he that so feigns an oath would be guilty of perjury and sin mortally, if he swears falsely; and he that subscribes to any contract and binds himself under oath, and yet has no intention to obligate himself, must fulfill his contract and carry out his promise, as if his oath had been sincere; besides he is also guilty of a grievous sin of perjury, because he swore to a lie when he did not intend to carry out his agreement.

342. What is a vow?

A vow is a deliberate promise to God to do something that is pleasing to Him.

In this definition of a vow are four things to be

noticed: 1st, a promise; 2nd, a deliberate promise; 3rd, made to God; 4th, to do something pleasing to God.

1. By a promise is meant an obligation which he who makes a vow, imposes upon himself; and in this it differs from a simple desire, resolution or determination.

2. A deliberate promise. By this is understood that to make a valid vow, there must be advertence to the obligation, or such reflection and full consent of the will as is sufficient for a mortal sin.

3. Only a promise made to God constitutes a vow, for a promise made to a fellow-man, or even to a saint, is not properly a vow; for a vow honors God, and as such it is an act of religious worship. The promise made to a saint could only be a vow, if one should request the saint to offer the vow to God; but a deliberate promise made to honor a saint by some specific devotion is a vow, if made to God, and the devotion be acceptable to Him.

4. The vow must be of something agreeable to God, and not of a thing in all respects indifferent, that is, neither good nor bad; but an action or deed in itself indifferent may on account of circumstances become good and virtuous, and then such a deed may become the matter of a vow; e. g., it is a matter of indifference whether one moderately drinks wine or not, but when one abstains from it for the sake of mortification, or because he is addicted to excessive drinking, such a promise of abstinence becomes good and agreeable to God. The taking of a pledge to abstain from intoxicants is in itself not a vow, but a solemn resolution which an honorable man should keep.

Some theologians add a fifth condition to constitute a vow, namely, that the promise must be possible or capable of being carried out, for no one can obligate himself to do what he cannot do. For this reason, a vow to abstain from any and all sins during one's whole life, would be invalid; but the vow to abstain from all mortal sins, would be valid; the former is impossible, and the latter is possible with the help of God's grace.

343. Is it a sin not to fulfill our vows?

Not to fulfill our vows is a sin, mortal or venial, according to the nature of the vow and the intention we had in making it.

In the preceding number we have seen what constitutes a vow and now we are asked if it is a sin not to fulfill a vow. As he that makes a vow assumes the obligation to fulfill it, it must be sinful not to comply with the obligation. But the main question is: what kind of a sin is it not to fulfill a vow.

1. To judge whether not to fulfill a vow is a mortal or only a venial sin, we must first take into consideration the intention of him who made the vow. If he intended to obligate himself only under pain of venial sin, the failure of fulfilling it could never be mortal, no matter what the vow is.

2. If in all respects the promise is of little consequence, the breaking of it constitutes only a venial sin; but circumstances may make a matter in itself trivial one of great importance: e. g., if one promised to avoid an act which for him, if not for others, is a proximate occasion of sin.

3. As he that makes a vow seldom deliberates whether he wishes to obligate himself under mortal or under venial sin, the obvious meaning of the words or of the resolution which constitutes the promise, common usage, and the circumstances which induced the making of the vow, as well as the practice of the Church, must decide the question; for one is presumed to have vowed according to general customs in vogue among God-fearing people. Whatever the Church sometimes commands or forbids under pain of mortal sin, cannot be considered a trivial matter; hence, a holy Mass, a confession, a Holy Communion, abstinence from flesh meat at a meal, also the recital of five decades of the Rosary, are all important matters, and he that vows any such religious practices, unless he expressly meant to obligate himself only under pain of venial sin, commits a mortal

sin, if he fails to comply with his promise; but the vow of reciting five Our Fathers and five Hail Marys with the Doxology is considered only trivial, and under ordinary circumstances, he who makes such a promise obligates himself only under pain of venial sin.

4. The obligation of a vow ceases by annulment or by dispensation, and likewise when circumstances make compliance with it impossible or of greater difficulty than was foreseen. A superior against whose rights inferiors have vowed, may annul the vow; children cannot make binding oaths contrary to the duty they owe to their parents; even a husband or wife cannot make a vow against the right of the consort, unless he or she consent; religious cannot make binding vows and should not make any, for ecclesiastical law forbids it.

The Church has received full power to loose or bind: "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven"; therefore the Church not only has the power to annul all vows of the faithful, no matter by whom made, but also and with more reason, can dispense from them, or change them into something equally good or agreeable to God, if he, who vowed, has a valid reason for not fulfilling his promise. The Holy See has delegated that power to the bishops with the power of subdelegating it to confessors. Therefore, if pious persons find it too onerous to fulfill their vows, let them apply to their confessors, who are authorized to commute the vows if they see good reason to do so. Finally, the obligation of a vow ceases when it becomes impossible to fulfill it, for no one is bound to do what he cannot do; moreover, the obligation ceases whenever unforeseen circumstances make the fulfillment of the promise very difficult, so that if one had foreseen them, he would not have vowed: e. g., a wealthy man vows to give a large sum of money to a church or to the poor, and after making the vow he loses his fortune and becomes so poor that he can hardly provide for his family. As long as he remains in that condition, he is not obliged to fulfill his vow, for he is not supposed to have vowed giving away what would be necessary for the suport of himself and family.

344. What is forbidden by the second commandment?

The second commandment forbids all false, rash, unjust and unnecessary oaths, blasphemy, cursing and profane words.

All important matters relating to an oath have been fully explained, and blasphemy, cursing and profane words now merit our attention.

Blasphemy consists in speaking with contempt of God, His angels and His saints, or of anything sacred that refers to God.

1. Blasphemy, by which the Greeks meant a contemptuous word or contemptuous speech, especially against their gods, although generally expressed orally, may be committed to writing, or expressed in a thought or desire, or even by a sign or by deed. Of the last-named blasphemy we have an example in the Apostate Julian, who, when dying of wounds flung some of his blood towards heaven.

2. In the definition of blasphemy we said that blasphemy consists in speaking of God with contempt, and this is done in two ways, either by denying what belongs to God or by affirming something of God that is contrary to His divine attributes; such as saying, "There is no God," "God is unjust," "God does not hear me nor care for me." This contempt of God may take several forms, such as anger, hatred or derision. We find an example of anger and hatred in the same Julian, when he exclaimed with his last breath, "Thou hast conquered, Galilean"; an example of derision in words and actions, when the Jews clothed Our Saviour with a purple garment, crowned Him with thorns, placed a reed for a sceptre in His hand, then bent their knee before Him and mockingly saluted Him saying: "Hail, King of the Jews." The mock-salutation, and every single action of the Jews, contained a blasphemy.

3. As God is praised in His saints, when their works which God operated in them are lauded, likewise

blasphemy directed against the saints also necessarily redounds to God. (St. Thos., II. 2, q. 13, a. 1 to 2). From which we also conclude that if we deny to the saints or angels what belongs to them as friends of God, or contemptuously attribute to them what is not true, it is also blasphemy; and this applies also to the Sacraments or to anything sacred, when referred to God as its Author.

Cursing. What is a curse? A curse is a malediction or imprecation against ourselves or others, i. e., the wishing, in anger or hatred, of evil to ourselves or to others or even to irrational creatures.

The sin of cursing must be distinguished from swearing. Among boys in the United States, by swearing is generally meant profane language, and some even confuse swearing, blaspheming, cursing, and the use of profane language, and call it all swearing. Again, the name of profane language is often given to cursing and blaspheming, and even to the irreverent or vain use of the name of God. With most people such words as "damn," "devil," "hell," and even vulgar words, are properly considered profane language, but excluding the intention of shocking the sensibilities of a well-bred neighbor, there is no particular sin in using such words, excepting the sin of possible scandal or of disobedience to parents and other superiors who have forbidden their use.

In No. 337 the irreverent use of the name of God, angels and saints, has received due consideration, and we have now only to add a further explanation on the sinfulness of the different species, or ways, of offending God, against the second commandment, with the exclusion of sinful oaths and vows already explained before.

First of all, let it be said that irreverence to the holy names of God or of our Saviour, and blaspheming and cursing are specific sins of a specific guilt, and, therefore, can not be confessed under a general name of profane language; nor is it allowed to confess cursing as

swearing. The irreverent use of the name of God or of the saints constitutes only a venial sin, unless the sinner intends in anger or revenge to insult God directly, or feels hateful or spiteful towards Him, the saints, the Sacraments, or anything else that in a special manner refers to God. Blasphemy is by its very nature a mortal sin, whether the contumelious language is directly intended or not, provided what is thought, said, done or written contains, according to common interpretation, a contumely or an insult against God, the saints, the Sacraments, or anything holy of which God is the Author and which refers to Him in a particular manner. Truncated curses or blasphemies without the name of God are not generally considered as mortal sins, for since such expressions have in themselves no meaning, according to common usage, the use of them cannot be a grievous offense, unless a blasphemy or curse be directly intended. A curse is a mortal sin if the malediction be intended against a rational creature in heaven or on earth, but it is not a sin to curse the evil spirits of hell; nor is it a mortal sin foolishly to curse irrational creatures: a horse, a storm, the wind, etc.: it is only a sin of anger, or if the name of God be used, also a sin of irreverence, provided again that there be no wicked intention directed against God, the Creator and Preserver of all that exists.

The many exemplary punishments meted out by God to blasphemers and cursers, which are related in Holy Scriptures and ecclesiastical history, show us what abominable sins blasphemy and cursing are in God's eyes; for "he, that blasphemes or curses, holds the language of the demons and of the damned in hell." "The man that curseth his God, shall bear the sin—He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, dying let him die. All the multitude shall stone him, whether he be a native or a stanger." (Lev. xxiv. 10-16). For the sake of brevity we cite only a few of the striking examples of punishment of cursers and blasphemers. In the Book of Numbers we read that Core, Dathan and Abiron and two hundred and fifty others were swallowed up by the earth, because they had revolted against Aaron and Moses, and had blasphemed the name of the Lord. (Num. xvi. 30). Antiochus, famous for his cruelty

to the Jews, was on account of his blasphemies eaten alive by worms, and the flesh fell in pieces from his body. (2 Mach. ix. 9). Sennacherib, King of Assyria, having sent a blasphemous letter to King Ezechias of Juda, the angels of the Lord killed one hundred and eighty-five thousand soldiers of his army. (4 Kings, xix; Isaias, xxxvii). Nestorius, who refused to the Blessed Virgin the title of Mother of God, was severely punished for his blasphemy against the Saviour and His Blessed Mother. His flesh rotted on his body and his tongue swarmed with worms. (Cf. Baronius, Eccl. Annals). St. Louis of France had such a horror of blasphemy, that he is said to have ordered that the tongue of a blasphemer should be pierced with a red-hot iron; but when it was reported to him that certain persons had cursed him for his severity, he forgave the offense, because, he said, they had neither blasphemed nor cursed God. (Cf. Life of the Saint). Louis XIV also published a law against blasphemers; the guilty ones for the first time were only condemned to pay a fine, and this fine increased with every succeeding violation of the law, up to the fifth time, when they were placed in a pillory; at the sixth and seventh time their upper or lower lip was to be perforated, and finally, if they would not amend, their tongue was to be cut out.

345. What is the third commandment?

The third commandment is: Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath Day.

There are two things to be considered in this commandment: first, the moral or natural law, which obliges every man, who has arrived at the use of reason, to set aside some part of his life to the internal and external worship of God; and, secondly, the ceremonial part of the commandment, i. e., the positive part of the law, which is subject to change. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 122, a. 4, to 1). God chose the last day of the week, the Sabbath, as a day set apart for rest and divine worship,—and in this the commandment is ceremonial—, because creation was finished on the sixth day and God rested on the seventh. Therefore the commandment begins by the word: Remember, for it was in memory of God's resting or completing the wonderful work of bringing forth all things from nothing; a second reason

may be given of why God prefixes the word "remember" to this commandment alone, and it is that this commandment, as to the time set apart for religious worship, does not belong to the natural law, and, therefore, a special warning is used: "remember." (St. Thos., II. 2, q. 100, a. 7, to 5).

So far as the ceremonial part is concerned, it was obligatory on the Israelites only, for, when the ceremonies of the Old Law were abolished by Christ, such as circumcision and sacrifices offered in the temple, the obligation of keeping the Sabbath Day holy, became obsolete and void, with all the rest of the ceremonial of the Jews.

By the words "keep holy" in the commandment, we should understand that on that day we must lay aside all business, all temporal affairs, all occupations and amusements incompatible with the holiness of the day; that the day itself must be mostly employed in honoring and worshipping God; and that, at least generally speaking, all our occupations on that day should tend to the sanctification of our soul. An account of the ceremonies which had to be observed on the Sabbath by the Israelites does not concern us now, as the whole ceremonial of the Mosaic Law is a thing of the past, as even orthodox Jews practically admit.

346. What are we commanded by the third commandment?

By the third commandment we are commanded to keep holy the Lord's Day and the holydays of obligation, on which we are to give our time to the service and worship of God.

From the explanation given in the preceding number, it is evident that by this commandment, Christians are bound only to set apart some specified time for the external worship of God, and that in this worship the whole Christian world should take part; for man is a social being as we have already remarked, and as such,

all the members of society should show their reverence for and their dependence on God, or in other words worship Him openy and publicly, in a more or less solemn manner. As we love as a nation to celebrate, in a particular manner, the great anniversaries of those days that brought to the people many blessings of far-reaching consequences, such as Independence Day, so it behooves us as members of God's chosen people, to set apart for public worship and thanksgiving those days on which spiritual blessings were showered down in abundance on God's chosen children. But the choice of such days and the manner in which the festivities should be conducted, depends on God and His representatives on earth. Therefore the explanation of the answer in the present number belongs to the lesson on the precepts of the Church, for the Church alone has the power to frame laws on all spiritual matters, relating to our supernatural life here and to everlasting life hereafter.

Let us not forget that the Jewish government was both political and ecclesiastical and is properly called a theocracy or the government established and maintained by God until the Messiah came, Who has attributed to the civil and the ecclesiastical authority, separate and distinct rights and powers, for the one is established for the temporal welfare and the other for the spiritual and eternal welfare of their respective subjects.

347. How are we to worship God on Sundays and holydays of obligation?

We are to worship God on Sundays and holydays of obligation by hearing Mass, by prayer and by other good works.

In order to avoid useless repetitions, this answer will be fully explained when we treat of the precepts of the Church. (Cf. Nos. 384—386).

348. Are the Sabbath Day and the Sunday the same?

The Sabbath Day and the Sunday are not the same.

The Sabbath Day is the seventh day of the week and is the day which was kept holy in the Old Law; the Sunday is the first day of the week and is the day which is kept holy in the New Law.

In this answer, we understand by the Old Law, the law given by God to the Israelites through Moses; and by the New Law the law of Christ and of His Church, which has received full authority from Christ, her Founder, to expound and supplement the laws framed by Him for the spiritual welfare of all her members. (Cf. No. 123).

The Old Law, of which God Himself was the Author, and Moses only the promulgator, prescribed that the seventh day of the week should be kept as a holy day, in remembrance of the creation when God completed His work in six days and then rested. It was meet and just that the whole world should remember, by fitting public ceremonies, the completion of that beneficent and stupendous work. We may moreover surmise that for a long time after the creation, the seventh day of the week was kept as a day of thanksgiving by the children of Adam, and observed likewise, after the Deluge, by holy men even among the Gentiles; for the word "remember" more than likely referred also to the old custom of celebrating the day as a day of spiritual rejoicing, of praise, of prayer, of sacrifices and of thanksgivings, but which in the course of time, when nearly all people had sunk into the most degrading idolatry, had well-nigh been forgotten.

349. Why does the Church command us to keep the Sunday holy, instead of the Sabbath?

The Church commands us to keep the Sunday holy, instead of the Sabbath, because on Sunday Christ rose from the dead, and on Sunday He sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.

The creation of the world was for the benefit of the whole human race, but after the fall of Adam, apart from the Redemption, the existence of man became a curse: misery and death, after sufferings without consolation or hope, was the lot of our first parents and of their posterity; and at the close of their miserable life on earth, what could they hope for? Nothing, for

the largest number at least, but everlasting misery, and for all without exception, an eternal separation from God, the Source of all good.

Christians do not forget the benefits of creation, for now they can again rejoice, with a pure and holy joy, because of the blessings vouchsafed through it, since through Christ, His Sacraments and His Church, the guilt of Adam's sin and of our own personal sins has been washed away. Should we not hold especially in memory the day on which the curse of Adam's sin was turned into a blessing by Christ's Redemption? The creation of the world and of our first parents may be truly reckoned amongst the greatest works of God, but when we compare it with Redemption, it fades away like a star at the approach of the sun. What did creation cost the Creator? A single act of His will, a "fiat," and for the appearance upon the world of our first parents, a "let us make"; but to redeem the human race, it required in the councils of the Blessed Trinity, that a God should assume human nature, blot out iniquity by satisfying for it, and thereby reinstate us, in a superabundant manner, in all the rights as children and heirs of God, which we had lost through Adam's disobedience. "O happy sin that has merited so great a Redeemer! (Blessing of the Paschal Candle).

Now, there are two days more than all others forever memorable, which Christians should forever cherish and celebrate with universal rejoicing and great public festivities: one is the day when the chains of their infernal slavery were burst asunder, when they were liberated and became free, the day of Christian Independence, and that day is Easter Sunday, when Christ triumphed over death and hell, rose glorious and immortal, completing on that early Sunday morning the work of our Redemption. The final victory was won on that day, and the infernal legions were routed and vanquished. The second day, likewise forever memorable, was also a Sunday. It was the day of the promulgation

of the New Law, the promulgation of the Christian Constitution, under which men will live until the end of the world, and by which all men are free, and all are invited to partake of the blessings which Christ merited by His sufferings and death. That day was Pentecost Sunday, when the Apostles, led by the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, proclaimed salvation for all men. Easter is the day of victory, and Pentecost is the day of the proclamation of our freedom from the archenemy of our salvation.

Other reasons are given why the Apostles decreed that the first day of the week should be kept as a holy day and not the last day or Sabbath: namely, because the faithful at the dawn of Christianity, avoided celebrating their feast days on the same day as the Jews, and again, "Christ," says St. Augustine, "will come to judge all men on a Sunday, which will be for the elect the beginning of a new life, and the entrance into glory that will know no end."

That the change from the Sabbath to the Sunday as a weekly holyday comes from Apostolic times, admits of no doubt. The Apostles themselves observed the Sunday as the Lord's Day. On Pentecost Sunday they began their mission of preaching and baptizing, and on each Sunday, or first day of the week, they regularly gathered the people to assist at the Sacrifice of the New Law, the Mass, or the Breaking of Bread, as the Acts of the Apostles call it. (Acts, xx. 7). Again, we read of the order of St. Paul to make a collection for the poor of Jerusalem on the first day of the week (1 Cor. xvi. 2-4), for no other reason than that the Christians were always gathered together on that day. From the time of the Apostles, the first day of the week was called the Lord's Day. (Apoc. i. 10). Disputes arose between the Greek and the Latin Churches about the proper time for the celebration of Easter, but as to the day of the week, to be kept holy in the Church, and as to the change from the Sabbath to the Sunday, there has always been perfect unanimity between the Western and the Eastern Churches.

350. What is forbidden by the third commandment?

The third commandment forbids all unnecessary servile works and whatever else may hinder the due observance of the Lord's Day.

351. What are servile works?

Servile works are those that require labor of body rather than of mind.

By ecclesiastical law three things only are especially forbidden: first, servile works; second, trading, viz., buying and selling; third, court proceedings.

1. By servile works we understand in general all such works as were in the first centuries of Christianity performed by slaves (servi), and are now performed by servants; they comprise mostly all those occupations that require rather labor of the body than of the mind.

Custom has mitigated to a large extent the severity of the Jewish as well as of the original ecclesiastical law; but all work in general which hinders the due observance of the Lord's Day is prohibited. Therefore, besides servile works, commerce or trading, and court proceedings, come also under the head of forbidden occupations.

Servile works or occupations that require labor of the body rather than of the mind, are: mechanical labor, labor on farms, general painting and cleaning, sewing, mending and all kinds of handicraft. These are forbidden under pain of mortal sin, and the reason is clear; for such work is generally performed by servants or hired help, and if masters or heads of families could order the performance of such labor, those employed in it could not keep the day holy. Now if on Sundays those working for others, do not honor and worship God, as every man is bound to do by the natural law, when will they do so?

2. By commerce and trading must be understood all manner of buying and selling in an open and public manner, as by keeping open large stores, attending fairs, public auctions,, such buying and selling, especially, as necessitates the moving or packing of merchandise. But custom has made it lawful to sell and buy small quantities of provisions unexpectedly needed by any family or individual for the Sunday itself or even for next day's breakfast.

3. By court proceedings are understood all proceedings in civil, ecclesiastical, criminal, military or com-

mercial tribunals and courts, where witnesses are summoned, or where pleadings and examinations of persons concerned or of witnesses take place, and verdicts or decisions are given.

What sin is it to desecrate the Sunday or other holydays of obligation? It is a mortal sin to employ without necessity from two to two and a half hours in any forbidden labor, and it is a venial sin to labor less than two hours.

352. Are servile works on Sundays ever lawful?

Servile works are lawful on Sundays and holydays of obligation, when the honor of God, the good of our neighbor or necessity requires them.

The catechism in this answer gives us three reasons for which servile works may be done on Sundays: when the honor of God, or the good of our neighbor, or necessity, i. e., our own indispensable good, requires them.

1. Those are excused from mortal and venial sin, who labor for the honor and glory of God, as at work done in churches and chapels in ornamenting and beautifying the altars or in preparing for processions and other services of the Church. "Have ye not read in the law that on Sabbath Days the priests in the temple break the Sabbath, and are without blame?" (Matt. xii. 5).

2. Those again are blameless, who on Sundays or other feast-days of obligation, perform any labor necessary to avoid serious loss to themselves or their neighbor, or which is necessary for the comfort of themselves or of others, viz., work in hospitals, in communities, in boarding schools, orphanages, in hotels and boarding houses, and all ordinary and daily household duties, which suffer no delay until the next day. "What man shall there be among you that hath one sheep, and if the same fall into a pit on the Sabbath Day, will not take hold of it and lift it up?" (Matt. xii. 11).

3. All servile work that can, without serious loss

or discomfort, be anticipated or deferred, should not be performed on days that are to be kept holy; and therefore, long voyages should not be undertaken without necessity on Sundays or other days of obligation, or even on the previous day, if they can be delayed; for, although travelling on steamers and riding on cars is not servile work, it often hinders the observance of the Lord's Day. But there is no sin in starting on a long journey after hearing Mass, nor is it sinful, if there is any utility in it, to take a ride or a long walk on any day of obligation, especially if the party doing so intends to assist at the evening services in Church. Custom has made the Lord's Day partly a holy day and partly a day of recreation, and the Church has raised no objection. The authorities of the Church nevertheless look with disfavor upon the holding of picnics, barbecues, races, public games, etc., on Sundays; for as they attract large numbers of people and many are employed in the preparation of such public gatherings, many are prevented from hearing Mass and from attending to other religious obligations.

Labor that cannot be delayed, like that about brick-ovens, furnaces, smelters, etc., which cannot be cooled off without serious loss, can be performed without sin on holy days of obligation, and the same must be said of hauling crops to the barn, when there is danger of rain.

4. As it is only a venial sin, barring the danger of scandal, to perform servile work for an hour or even up to two hours, any well-grounded reason will easily excuse the really poor from guilt, in mending their own or their children's clothes or doing any other light work; for the less the labor, the less reason is required for a valid excuse. But the common excuse that the labor is not done for gain is not a valid one; there must always be some immediate necessity to excuse one from all sin.

Conclusion. In these days, when faith and morals are exposed to so many dangers, when, among the masses, faith

is well-nigh drowned in irreligion, and morals have given way to licentiousness, there is a general tendency to make light of the desecration of the Sabbath and of all holy days of obligation. Much evil has come upon the world, as a direct punishment of this abuse by an angered, all-holy God: hence, our Lady of La Sallette, when she appeared to two children, announced that terrible chastisements were to come upon France and upon the whole world for these three principal sins: blasphemy, desecration of the Sunday and of other holy days of obligation, and the violation of the law of abstinence.

The New Law, the law of grace and of love, has supplanted the Old Law, the law of fear, and if those who desecrate the Lord's day, are no more condemned to death, as we read in Holy Scripture of the man who had gathered wood on the Sabbath and who was stoned to death (Numb. xv. 35), let them remember that the God of Israel is also the God of the Christians, and the same reward for keeping the Lord's Day and the same punishments for the violation of the law await the one and the other, even in this life. To be convinced of this truth, it is necessary only to read carefully the passage of Leviticus referring to it. (Lev. xxvi. 2, sq.)

LESSON THE THIRTY-THIRD

FROM THE FOURTH TO THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

353. What is the fourth commandment?

The fourth commandment is: Honor thy father and thy mother.

With the fourth commandment begins the second table of the law, which contains all the commandments that regard the love of our neighbor; and the commandment: Honor thy father and thy mother, occupies the first place among them all, as it has primarily for object the filial duty of children to parents and all relatives in an ascending line, i. e., grandfathers and grandmothers, etc. It is the most sacred of all duties towards our fellow-men, and, therefore, it is well that this duty should occupy the first place in our earnest attention.

To the fourth commandment, as well as to the third, is attached, as a reward for its fulfillment, not only a spiritual

advantage, but also a temporal one; for, after giving the commandment: Honor thy father and thy mother, the good God adds, as a sanction to the law, "that thou mayest be longlived upon the land, which the Lord thy God will give thee." (Ex. xx. 12). And Moses repeating the law in Deuteronomy (Deut. v. 16), says: "Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God has commanded thee, that thou mayest live a long time, and it may be well with thee in the land, which the Lord thy God will give thee." God has then promised those who honor their father and mother and all lawful superiors, not only a long life, but a life of happiness. Children, who are grateful for the life which they owe, next to God, to their parents, are becomingly rewarded by the prolongation of that life; and likewise ungrateful children deserve to be deprived of life, on account of their ingratitude to those who gave it, and preserved it for them during their infancy. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 122, a. 5).

God is always faithful to His promises, and if the life of dutiful and respectful children is sometimes shortened, and they are taken away in their youth, to them may be applied the words of the Wise Man: "He pleased God and was beloved, and living among sinners he was translated. He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul." (Wis. iv. 10, 11). Such children are translated from earth to heaven, and can we compare the transitory happiness of earth with the unlimited delights of Paradise? Wickedness and depravity, by which they were surrounded, might have become the cause of their eternal ruin, and such calamities as war, and pestilence, or other world-wide misfortunes, might have been in store for the obedient and loving children, if they had lived a longer life; so that it is often a blessing for them to be taken away prematurely.

354. What are we commanded by the fourth commandment?

We are commanded by the fourth commandment to honor, love and obey our parents in all that is not sin.

When God enjoins upon all: "Honor thy father and thy mother," He imposes upon us these four obligations: love, reverence, obedience and aid.

1. Love. Children owe to their parents the greatest love and affection their hearts are capable of, second only to love for God, Who is the first and primary

Source of all good. This love should be: (a) sincere, and, therefore, should not be hypocritical, but come from the heart, nor should it be prompted by fear of punishment or loss of some reward; (b) interior and exterior. There are a thousand ways by which children can prove their affection for their parents, e. g., by rejoicing at their good qualities, or when they hear them praised or rewarded, or when they see them happy and contented; and by feeling sad when anyone speaks disrespectfully of them and when any trouble or sickness comes to them. They may manifest their love also by any act of kindness that may please their parents, especially if they as readily comply with their desires as with their orders. Hence, children are guilty of mortal sin, given sufficient knowledge and full consent of the will, when they inwardly hate their parents and wish them serious harm; when they rejoice if some great sickness or other evil has befallen them. But the most abominable of all sins against the love due to parents, is the wish of a wayward child for the death of its parents in order to inherit their fortune sooner. Children will often commit a venial sin through want of love and gratitude towards their parents by failing to pray for them, and by neglecting to show their affection through a thousand little attentions, so dear to the heart of parents, and which sincere love prompts and suggests.

Sincere love of parents also demands that children should not sadden the heart of their parents by their conduct; for, if good reports of their children from neighbors and friends gladden the hearts of fathers and mothers, evil reports bring tears to their eyes, and shame to their old age, for "A wise man maketh the father glad, but a foolish son is the sorrow of his mother" (Prov. x. 1), and "Children's children are the crown of old men and the glory of children are their fathers." (Prov. xvii. 6). "A foolish son is the grief of his father and he that afflicteth his father and chaseth away his mother, is infamous and unhappy." (Prov. xix. 13, 36).

2. Reverence. Reverence is an interior or exterior recognition of the superiority of the parents, of their dignity and of their pre-eminence.

Reverence is due to all persons placed in authority from those subject to them; but in the order established by God, parents should occupy the first place above all others in their children's estimation. Hence, children should speak to them with respect, humbly defer to their teachings, their advice and their opinion, and joyfully accept the rules laid down for their conduct, whether in matters spiritual or temporal; children should not contradict their parents, nor show by sign or gesture that they are displeased with any arrangements regarding their clothing, their food, their amusements and the choice of their companions. "My son hear the instruction of thy father and foresake not the law of thy mother, that grace may be added to thy head and a chain of gold to thy neck." (Prov. i. 8, 9).

Children should above all speak well of their parents, and avoid companions who speak with disrespect of their own or their companions' fathers or mothers. Finally, this respect for father and mother should not cease at their death, but children are bound to give to their parents a Christian and honorable burial, as the last testimony of veneration, and they should also keep their memory in esteem.

We have two beautiful examples in Holy Writ of the honor and esteem given to parents by their children. When Joseph was raised to the highest dignity in Egypt by Pharaoh, the king, he sent for his father, then inhabiting Canaan, and received him with all honor (Gen. xlvi); and Solomon, son of David, hearing of his mother's coming, rose from his throne to meet her and placed her on a throne at his right hand (3 Kings ii. 19). But the greatest and noblest example of filial esteem we find in Jesus of Nazareth, Who for thirty years gave proof of the most respectful veneration for His Blessed Mother and His Foster-Father, St. Joseph, so that St. Luke says

of Him, that He was subject to them and advanced in wisdom and age, and grace with God and men. (Luke, ii. 51, 52).

3. Obedience. Children must obey their parents in all that is not sin, and in this obedience must be included a prompt and willing desire to do, not only what is explicitly commanded, but also what the parents desire and what children know would please them. Parents occupy the place of God Himself, and, therefore, to disobey them is to disobey the Father in Heaven. Hence, when the parent's will is made known by command or by prohibition, the children should consider it as sacred as if God had commanded it by an angel from heaven. If they truly love their parents, and esteem them as representatives of God, they will hold nothing more sacred than to follow all their parents' wishes and avoid what would displease them, whether the parents are present or absent. Children are but too apt to act in one way when they are under the eyes of their superiors, and in another when they are out of their sight; this is hypocrisy and unworthy of a well-reared son or daughter.

The following rules regarding the duties of children should be borne in mind: (a) children should hold no secrets from their parents: girls should make a confidant of their mother, and boys likewise of their father; if one of the parents dies, the remaining parent should be the confidential friend of both sons and daughters. (b) Children should especially avoid playmates whose company has not been approved by their parents, even if the children themselves do not see any reason why such companionship is forbidden them. (c) As all well-raised children know full well that cursing, swearing, and profane or filthy language would displease their parents and their God, they should avoid those who indulge in such language or are guilty of any indecent behavior; for to frequent their society can hardly be excused from a mortal sin. Children will often do a great favor to their parents by reporting to them the

improper language and conduct of their companions. (d) Children are often guilty of a mortal sin when they frequent places or company forbidden them, or take part in unlawful amusements, or go away from home, especially late in the evening, against the will of their parents.

All that has been said of the obligations and duties of children towards their parents, is equally true of what they owe to those who take the parents' place, such as guardians or teachers, to whom parents confide their children for the time being.

4. Aid. The necessity of parents, which demands aid from their children, may be temporal or spiritual.

(a) Fathers and mothers struggling for the support of themselves and of their chilldren, should be able to save something from their earnings to provide for future eventualities, such as sickness or accidents, which might prevent them from earning a sufficient living. In such cases, both boys and girls should be but too glad to help their parents, by being careful of their clothing and their books, by avoiding waste in food; and they should not worry their father or mother by asking for things that are unnecessary or extravagant. When old enough and they see their parents in straightened circumstances, sons and daughters should, with the permission of their parents, seek employment to provide for their own and their parents' maintenance and for the support of the family; for a son or a daughter who will allow those who gave them life, to make appeal to public charity, if they can prevent it by proper efforts, deserve the malediction of God and the execration of their fellow-men. In other necessities, such as sickness, accidents or other misfortunes, children should console their parents, and if need be, take care of them. Above all, no boys or girls should without the consent of their parents leave the parental home before their twenty-first or eigthteenth year respectively, especially if thereby they leave their parents without support for the future.

(b) The most important part of children's duties towards their parents, is the aid they should give them in their spiritual need. Some of those duties are easy enough, such as to pray frequently, yea daily, to obtain for them, besides temporal blessings, all spiritual favors; promptly to procure the Sacraments for them in a serious illness, and when either or both of them have departed this life, to pray, assist at Mass, go to Holy Communion, fast and abstain, and have Masses said for the repose of their souls. But what should children do when one or the other parent does not practice his or her religion, does not hear Mass on days of obligation, does not attend to his or her Easter duty? What if their father often curses or blasphemes, or is frequently intoxicated, or is known to belong to secret societies or to be affiliated with associations whose object is criminal or of an evil tendency, like radical socialism? Have they no obligation in such extreme cases, whereas experience teaches that parents are often reclaimed from their evil ways through the influence of their children? They are bound under pain of mortal sin to do all in their power to keep their parents from the danger of losing their souls, as they must also prevent anyone, and especially their father and mother, from mortally offending God, if they can do so. But how can this duty be discharged? When children see their father or mother leading a careless life or addicted to sinful habits, they should have recourse to prayer for light from on high; they should place their good intention under the protection of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Joseph, the perfect model of all husbands, and take counsel with the parent who is not at fault, or with their pastor or confessor. No general rule of action can be laid down, for each sad case requires a different treatment and remedy; but children of sufficient age to reflect and understand, should be convinced that in so deplorable a spiritual necessity of a father or mother, they are bound to do their best to reclaim their parent from a state of sin and

shame. They should gladly undertake the reform of either parent, if with the help of fervent prayer, a practical way can be found that may promise good results. If children are truly devoted to a parent, in spite of his or her vices, and earnestly beg God for light and courage, their merciful Father in Heaven will not refuse them the necessary graces to accomplish a desire so pleasing to Him.

What duties does a wife owe to her husband? Love, respect and obedience, because husband and wife are but two in one flesh (Gen. ii. 24), and because the woman "is under the husband's power and he has dominion over her." (Gen. iii. 16). But the correlative duties of husband and wife have been ennobled and elevated by Christian marriage, and therefore this subject belongs primarily to the lesson on Matrimony.

Should children obey their parents in all things? Before solving this question, let it be understood that the answer is applicable not only to children with respect to their parents, but also to all inferiors and subjects with regard to superiors, teachers, masters and all other established authority.

1. It is evident that when a commandment, emanating from any authority, is contrary to the eternal law of God, no inferior may obey it; for to obey would be a sin, and sin never ceases to be an offense against the Divine Majesty. By eternal laws are meant the laws which the all-holy God necessarily enacts with due regard to His own honor and the rights and duties of the free-agents whom He created to work out their destiny. Such are for man all the laws of the Decalogue, with the exception of the precept regarding the time and manner of publicly honoring God, which was expressed in the Old Law by the third commandment: "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath Day." Hence children cannot obey their parents, if they are ordered to blaspheme, curse, steal, fight, seek revenge or commit impurities. No law can command a man to commit suicide, or to engage in duelling, or to take part freely in an evidently unjust war.

2. The positive laws of the Church, if not based on the eternal law, are not binding under conditions of great difficulty, or if great personal harm may be feared from their observance. Hence if a child is forbidden under threat of punishment to go to Mass on Sundays, to abstain on Fridays, or if a domestic is commanded to do servile work on Sundays, a child may obey without sin, and the servant may blamelessly do the servile work, although the latter is in conscience obliged to seek another employment as soon as practicable. More-

over, a child may secretly attend Mass or perform other religious duties against the will of an impious and unnatural parent.

3. Parents and other superiors may also exceed the limits of their lawful authority by interfering with their children's vocation, viz., by forcing or by unduly urging their sons to enter the priesthood or a religious community, or their daughters to enter a convent, or by preventing their sons and daughters from embracing a state of life to which their vocation leads them. In this, children are not obliged to obey anyone, for it belongs to them by right to choose the vocation which, according to their judgment and inclination, may best help them to become useful members of society and, what is more important than all, to make sure of their eternal destiny.

355. Are we bound to honor and obey others than our parents?

We are also bound to honor and obey our bishops, pastors, magistrates, teachers, and other lawful superiors.

The reason of this answer will be evident to anyone who considers that superiors should be in our eyes what they are in the eyes of God. Order demands that some should command, others obey; that some should govern and others be governed. Some govern for the temporal welfare of their subjects and others for their spiritual welfare. The Church was founded by Christ to bring all her members to their ultimate end, and hence all spiritual authority justly demands from its subjects, cooperation in action for the individual and general welfare in things spiritual. The Pope and the bishops are the established rulers in the Church, and to them we owe respect and obedience, and not only to them, but to all those appointed by them, such as pastors and their assistants, as well as to the members of the different Congregations appointed by the Holy Father and to the Cardinals who help him in the general government of the Church, etc. To all these respect and obedience is due. We honor besides all priests because they are Christ's ambassadors, but we owe them no obedience unless they be our superiors.

This duty of respect and obedience extends also to all orders, directions and teachings emanating from the lawfully established authority, the Pope and bishops, and not only in matters strictly spiritual, but in matters that are in any way connected with what is spiritual, such as social problems, education, societies and the affiliation of Catholics with them. The voice of the Pope and of the bishops should be, to all the members of the Church, the voice of God. All the decrees and instructions of the Holy See should be conscientiously and cheerfully obeyed, whether they be strictly enjoined or only proposed for our guidance.

Likewise servants and dependents owe respect to their employers, in their absence as well as in their presence; and this respect should especially be shown in speaking of them to outsiders, friends or strangers. Servants make their bargains with their masters, but once made and understood, their obligations as servants extend to all the occupations for which they are hired, binding them to their work faithfully, not to idle away their time, to take care of the property under their charge and cause no waste or injury to it, to show their employers a proper respect based on an interior conviction of their subordinacy during the time of their service, to obey their orders, not to talk to others of their master's or mistress' faults, and keep the family secrets. "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle but also to the froward," i. e., to the harsh. (1 Peter, ii. 18).

Our holy Religion teaches us also that we must honor and obey those who have authority over us in temporal matters, be they kings, presidents, governors, magistrates or other legitimate authorities; for "all power is from God. . . . And he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist purchase to themselves damnation." (Rom. xiii. 1, 2). Hence all subjects are bound in conscience to honor and obey all those constituted in authority to rule and to

govern in temporal matters, provided that rulers do not clearly exceed their powers. This duty falls especially on Catholics, for the evil they do is but too often laid at the door of their Religion. (Cf. 1 Peter, ii. 12-17).

St. Peter teaches clearly the duty of subjects to established authority and of servants to their masters, but always as servants of God: i. e., they should refer their subjection to the high motive of serving God by obeying their worldly masters (1 Peter, ii. 13,-18); for "all authority comes from God and those that are placed in power are so constituted, as if ordained by God Himself. (Rom. xiii. 1-7).

Besides the obligation to respect and honor all those invested with civil authority, we are bound also to obey the laws of our country. Those laws in matters of importance bind under pain of sin, unless they be purely penal, as, in practice at least, almost all citizens of the United States consider custom duties. The confiscation of the goods in case of attempted smuggling, when the culprit is caught, is considered a sufficient sanction of the law. Many people extend this exemption from moral evil or sin to excise laws, such as licenses for brewers, distillers, for dealers in wine, beer, liquors and tobacco, etc.; but, if this were admitted, there would be no limit to the application, and all laws would become penal laws, and none would bind the conscience of the evil-doer. This conclusion is absurd and contrary to the teachings of the Gospel: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." Furthermore, unscrupulous people would find reasons for evading their taxes, their assessments, their income tax, and thus open the way to fraud and perjury; and those of a still laxer conscience would extend this exemption from moral evil to their just debts and evade their payment if it could not be enforced in the courts of justice. Catholics, like all other citizens, must conscientiously perform their political duties to their respective governments, and they should unite with the honest and upright members of society at large, irrespective of their religion, in opposing and repressing the propaganda of evil and of vicious social theories. The individual Catholic alone is powerless, but Catholic societies like the Knights of Columbus and others just as worthy, whether local or national, should under the guidance of their respective bishops take the matter seriously in hand, and all other Catholics should co-operate with them, eschewing party lines, and having solely in view the welfare of the country at large and the good of religion. The federation of all Catholic

societies throughout the land, may, when once in good working order, fulfill that purpose; but until some system is adopted by the proper authorities, it is useless, except in some local emergency, to demand that Catholics shall by their votes at the polls, take an active part in questions of general interest bearing on morality or religion.

One of the most serious questions regarding social problems is the respective duties of servants and masters. The Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, of May 15, 1891, regards especially the duties of servants and employees towards their employers, and in it the following points should be noted: (a) the free and equitable contract entered into between employers and employees, should not be broken, but kept faithfully; (b) employees should not injure the person or property of their employers; (c) violence and sedition must not be employed by workingmen to overcome or abate their real or supposed grievances; (d) workingmen should keep aloof from wicked men and unlawful societies, banded together to excite the honest laboring man to envy and hatred of their wealthier employers, be they individuals or corporations, and above all they should shun those who promise to their followers a remuneration disproportionate to their labor; (e) Catholics especially should shun the socialist propaganda of our day, so destructive to morality, religion and social order.

356. Have parents and superiors any duties towards those who are under their charge?

It is the duty of parents and superiors to take good care of all under their charge and give them proper direction and example.

Parents must give to their children nourishment, instruction or education, correction, good example and vigilance.

1. **Nourishment.** By this is meant that parents must give to their children all that contributes to make them healthy and robust in body, and whatever may tend to their intellectual growth as well. This obligation begins before the child is born, and hence the mother must take care of her strength and health in order to preserve the health of the unborn child. Hence she should avoid such things as fast running, dancing, carrying heavy weights and all excesses in eating and drinking; and for the same reason, a father should not exasperate a prospective mother, or treat her with anger or insulting words, much less strike her. Such unnatural conduct cannot be excused from mortal sin.

Fathers and mothers must watch over their young children so that no harm may come to them, and they should also remove as far as possible all danger to their health. Parents sin grievously if they have no care of their children's future, and if, by squandering their income, they fail to provide for them a position befitting their rank in society.

Too often parents sin by excess, in dressing their children above their condition, thereby making them vain and ambitious. "If anyone have not care of his own and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 Tim. v. 8).

2. **Instructions and education.** This obligation imposes upon the parents the duty to give to their offspring a religious as well as a secular education; but the care of the soul is by far the more important and the more urgent, as it leads to the eternal welfare of the children, whereas the latter has in view solely their material interests. There is then a twofold instruction or education: first, secular, and, secondly, moral and religious. The state takes care of the secular instruction by obliging parents to send their children to school, but moral and religious instruction is inseparable from a true Christian education.

All education that does not tend to make children moral and religious, is rather detrimental than beneficial, as our criminal courts sufficiently attest. Catholics should, in the instruction given to their children, have principally in view the eternal welfare of their children's souls, and instruction to that end can, as a rule, be given only in Catholic schools and by exemplary Catholic teachers. Catholics contribute their share to the support of public schools, for the State must provide a secular education for all children of all religions; but no matter what sacrifice may be imposed upon parents, they sin grievously if they do not send their children to a Catholic school, provided there be one in the neighborhood. If there is no Catholic school at hand, they may, if they cannot educate them at home, send them to a neutral or public school, but never to a school in which the influences are anti-Catholic.

When we review what the Church, in the different instructions emanating from the Holy See, has prescribed on this subject of Catholic education, notably the instruction issued in 1895 by the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith with the approval of Leo XIII, to the Catholic bishops of England on attendance at non-Catholic universities, and the instructions issued by the Catholic bishops of England on the same subject, and when we bear in mind the decrees of the Third Council of Baltimore for our own country, the following rules may be laid down for the parents' guidance. a) Parents are not al-

lowed to send their children to schools which are positively injurious to their faith, e. g., if anything is taught in them contrary to faith or morals. b) Even if in public or neutral schools nothing is taught, done or said against the Catholic religion, still Catholics are forbidden to send their children to such schools, if there is a Catholic school in the neighborhood, or if they have the means to send them away from home to Catholic schools. In case of doubt that may arise from this rule, the bishop ought to be consulted directly, or indirectly through the parish priest. c) Catholics may teach in public or neutral schools, provided the books used contain nothing contrary to faith; but the bishop of each diocese has the power to forbid all attendance at such schools, whether by pupils or by teachers. d) As to normal schools and universities, the same rules apply, but as in the United States there is no Catholic university, in which all branches of superior knowledge are taught, for such branches as are not taught in a Catholic university or if Catholic universities teaching such branches, exist, but in a different state far removed from the pupil's residence, it may be tolerated that guardians and parents send their wards, sons and daughters to state universities, provided these students attend the lectures given by learned Catholics approved by the bishops, on history, philosophy and religion, with a view to counteract the evil effects of a neutral, erroneous or anti-religious curriculum.

3. **Correction.** Correction may be looked upon as a part of a good education, for to parents belongs the duty to correct their offspring in their conduct, e. g., if children say or do anything improper or contrary to truth or sound morals. Parents should curb every evil tendency in their children and not humor them in their self-will. No evil however small should be tolerated, and when stubbornness or peevishness is shown in words or actions, a prompt punishment should accompany the correction. But parents should never chastise in anger, manifested in words or in manners. Correction by word should precede the corporal punishment, so that the children may understand that love for them and zeal for God's honor prompt father or mother to chastise. Indeed, parents should be fully convinced that "he that spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him, correcteth him betimes." (Prov. xiii. 24). "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but the child that is left to his own will, bringeth his mother to shame." (Ib. xxix. 15). "A horse not broken becometh stubborn, and a child left to himself becometh headstrong. Give thy son his way and he shall make thee afraid of him." (Eccli. xxx. 1-13).

Fathers and mothers nevertheless should avoid brutality in punishing and should discriminate between thoughtless and

deliberate faults, reserving the severest chastisement for the latter, as severe punishments for slight offenses and leniency for sins that offend God grievously, prevent the wayward child from distinguishing thoughtlessness from deliberate malice. Above all, parents should never curse their children, for blessing brings blessing, and malediction often brings a curse from God: "The father's blessing establishes the houses of the children; but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation." (Eccli. iii. 11).

4. **Vigilance.** To instruction and correction belongs also vigilance. This duty must be constantly attended to and a vigilant care over children must extend to all the obligations of a Christian and to all that a Christian should avoid. Parents should see to it that their children say their prayers morning and night, before and after meals; that they regularly attend church and the catechism classes, and that they go regularly to confession and communion, as soon as they have arrived at the use of reason. They should watch over their occupations and amusements, and keep them away from bad company. In the evening, children should be kept at home, where parents should supervise their school-work and the books they peruse, or they should read to them when young some bible stories or other edifying examples of virtue. This vigilance should never cease as long as sons or daughters live under the parental roof.

5. **Good Example.** If obedience is the most important duty of children, good example is the strictest obligation of fathers and mothers. Without good example, their instructions, their correction and vigilance, will be of no avail; and this is so evident that no further explanation is required. Fathers and mothers should conscientiously comply with all their Christian duties, and avoid everything that may scandalize their offspring. Husband and wife, in their most intimate relations, should never before their children be guilty of detraction or backbiting, should never show a spirit of hatred or vindictiveness towards their neighbor, nor praise the rich for their wealth, nor despise the laboring man or woman or the poor on account of their condition, and never express pleasure in the misfortune of others: in a word, let them avoid in word or action what they would condemn in their children.

One practice above all others is here to be recommended, and that is family evening prayers, conducted by the father, and in his absence by the mother; and the servants if possible should be invited to attend. There is nothing that will foster more strongly the true spirit of the Christian family and restore it to its proper place in a well-regulated society.

All superiors participate in the paternal authority, and

therefore they are, although in a less degree than parents, responsible before God for the government of their subjects, and each one in the line of duty marked out by the authority he wields. If they have the right to exact respect and obedience, they have reciprocal obligations, similar to those of parents, towards their subjects or charges.

Masters and mistresses have towards their servants a definite and clear obligation, if these are Catholics like themselves; for they are bound to instruct them or procure their instruction in the duties of their religion, if they lack the necessary knowledge befitting their condition and capacity. They should require them to comply with their religious obligations; they should watch over their conduct, correct them, if they are at fault, and give them good example. Finally, masters are in justice bound to give all their domestics and employees wholesome food, to pay them their salary faithfully, and not to exact from them excessive labor. As to just and equitable salary, see Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, "Rerum novarum."

357. What is forbidden by the fourth commandment?

The fourth commandment forbids all disobedience, contempt and stubbornness towards our parents or lawful superiors.

In the preceding number the duties of children towards their parents were divided under four heads: love, respect, obedience and aid; hence, all that is opposed to those duties is forbidden by this commandment. We have likewise explained the duties of inferiors to superiors and vice versa, and shown that those who wilfully neglect these duties, act contrary to the order established by God; they sin against God, Who prohibits all offenses against His holy law, and punishes them in due time.

There is one question to which we call attention: Is it allowed to disobey or rebel against civil authority duly constituted? If civil authorities command what is

contrary to the law of God, it is evident, that we cannot obey, for we must obey God rather than man. But in the supposition that the civil power does not command what is intrinsically evil, but governs to the evident detriment of a large portion of the people, subject to its authority, or exercises its power in a tyrannical manner, contrary to justice and to the general welfare of the country, is rebellion justifiable? It is never allowed to the individual citizen or to a group of citizens on their own authority to rebel against a legitimately established government or one in which the subjects have acquiesced; for order is thereby more and more disturbed and fearful calamities, such as civil wars, follow such disturbances. (Encyclical of Leo XIII, Dec. 28, 1878). We have often seen examples of such upheavals in our own day and even in our own hemisphere: revolutions are often followed by a succession of counter-revolutions, for internal peace once disturbed, is not easily re-established. Still in some extraordinary cases, when all legitimate means have been fruitlessly resorted to and the yoke becomes unbearable, regularly elected bodies such as national senates and assemblies, or other bodies with right to frame laws, may declare the supreme authority forfeited and deliver the tyrant to the judicial power. Still, although this principle seems theoretically sound, the above mentioned Encyclical recommends, even in such extreme cases, that men have recourse to united prayer to the King of kings and the King of Peace. (Cf. St. Thos. II. 2, q. 104, a. 5).

358. What is the fifth commandment?

The fifth commandment is: Thou shalt not kill.

The preceding commandment: Honor thy father and mother regulates not only the respective duties of parents and children, but also those of guardians and wards, teachers and pupils, masters and servants, rulers and subjects. Masters and rulers participate in paternal authority to foster order in the social life, for all well-regulated civil society is based on paternal authority. The mutual obligations of superiors and

inferiors tend to the general welfare of all people, whether we consider them as forming a part of the family circle, as producers of the necessities and comforts of life—and then they are employers or employees—or simply as members of an organized social life.

Having so far explained what tends to happiness among the children of men, as social beings depending upon one another, we now come to the commandments that regard the protection of the individual in all that is most dear to him, viz., his life, his honor and his property. Since life is prized more than all other earthly goods, more than honor and possessions, the commandment that protects life is given first: viz., Thou shalt not kill.

359. What is forbidden by the fifth commandment?

The fifth commandment forbids all wilful murder, fighting, anger, hatred, revenge and bad example.

All killing is not sinful and, therefore, not murder:

1. It is not murder to kill irrational animals, because they, like all other things in the universe, were created for the use, comfort and enjoyment of man: "All that moves and lives shall be to you as food." (Gen. ix. 3). Therefore, there is no sin in destroying all dangerous and destructive beasts, or killing such animals as serve for man's food or clothing. But cruelty to animals by killing them by degrees and taking pleasure in seeing them suffer, denotes an unsympathetic and cruel heart.

2. The civil power, entrusted by law with the power of life and death, commits no murder when it takes the life of the criminal condemned to death. Many crimes in the Old Law were punishable by death. By God's command, Moses instructed the Israelites not to countenance evil in their midst: "Evil doers thou shalt not suffer to live." (Exod. xxii. 18).

There are Christians who consider capital punishment unlawful, but their arguments, if there were any weight in them, would also prove that criminals should

suffer no punishment whatever. Society at large has a right to take the life of a criminal who is dangerous and pernicious to the welfare of the community; but a private individual is not allowed to usurp that power, except in self-defence or in the defence of his family or others. That right belongs solely to the judicial power, armed with the authority of the law. It is well known that only fear of death will deter some criminals from committing the most atrocious crimes. (Cf. St. Thos. II. 2, q. 64, a. 2).

Likewise the soldier is guiltless, if, actuated only by the desire to serve his country, he kills an enemy in a just war.

3. He also is blameless who accidentally kills another, or who kills in self-defense, understood in the strictest sense; for, if he can save himself by flight or by the intervention of others, it is no longer self-defense. It is not allowed to kill an unjust aggressor after the deed is done, except by the authority of the law; nor is anyone allowed to kill an aggressor, if, by only maiming him, one can ward off the attack. With the exception of those cases, wilful murder is the greatest crime that can be committed against our neighbor.

Is a woman allowed to kill a man who attempts the violation of her person? To answer this question, we need only remark that in the eyes of many chaste and pure women, death would be more welcome than such a violation, and, therefore, a woman is undoubtedly justified in killing the aggressor who attempts the perpetration of the vile crime, provided it could not be prevented otherwise, as by screaming for help, etc.; as would be the case of a woman, who thinks herself too weak to resist, and is alone with no one within hearing. But it would not be allowed to kill the assailant after the perpetration of the crime, for the punishment of a criminal belongs to the law and not to the individual.

There are two kinds of murders, as there is a twofold life in man, the supernatural life of the soul and the natural life of the body. He that incites others to commit sin, is a greater criminal than he who takes away the life of the body: of this spiritual murder more will be said when we come to the subject of scandal.

That it is a heinous offense to commit murder, is evident from the fact that he who robs a fellow-man of his natural life, robs him of everything else; and should his victim be in the state of mortal sin, he is the direct cause of his eternal damnation. Hence, the fearful threat of Our Lord against a murderer: "I will require the blood of your lives at the hand of every beast and at the hand of man." (Gen. ix. 5).

Not only actual murder is prohibited by the fifth commandment, but also whatever may lead to the death of our neighbor, such as criminal carelessness from which loss of life may result. Indeed, if this result be foreseen as probable, it is wilful murder. He that buys or sells a poison with which anyone intends to kill his enemy, is guilty of murder, if the criminal intent was known or strongly suspected by the buyer or seller. Likewise, he that does not prevent a murder, if he can do so without danger to his own life, co-operates indirectly in the murderous act.

Suicide. He that commits suicide is a self-murderer, and a great sinner: first, because the life he has received is given to him to preserve, not to injure by any excess; that life is also given him in order that he may employ it for the good of his fellow-men, his family and his country, but above all that he may employ it to reach his destiny hereafter. How many sins in one diabolical deed. Secondly, by killing himself, the suicide dies in the act of sinning and he wills his eternal ruin: he deliberately runs into the jaws of hell, from which there is no escape.

Dueling. All quarrels and fights are so directly opposed to the spirit of the Christian Religion and to the brotherly love so strongly inculcated by the Saviour, that Christians now all look upon them as low and degrading. All honorable people, even among the most irreligious, agree that when serious difficulties occur between two parties about their respective rights, recourse should be had to the civil or criminal tribunals of the land to adjust the disputed claim, if the difficulty cannot be settled amicably out of court. But among a certain class of people, who prize themselves for their high standing, duels are still considered lawful and honorable for the avenging of insult.

The duelist is only less guilty than the suicide. He directly wills the murder of his fellow-man, and as both are guilty of crime, he wills indirectly the eternal perdition of his antago-

nist. Besides, he exposes himself to the loss of his own natural life and of the supernatural life of his soul. The church looks upon the duelist who dies in single combat, as a murderer and a suicide; yea, as a reprobate, for whom there is no hope of salvation. Hence suicides and duelists are deprived of Christian burial.

There is here no question of duels undertaken with the consent of proper authority, as, for instance, the duel, between David and Goliath, arranged by the two opposing armies. A duel is a private combat with deadly weapons between two persons, who have previously agreed about the time, place and the arms to be employed. If there be no agreement as to the three conditions, time, place and arms, it is not a duel in a strict sense, falling under the severe censure of the Church, which forbids dueling under pain of excommunication reserved to the Sovereign Pontiff. This censure falls likewise upon witnesses, counselors, abettors, and upon all those who take any direct or indirect part, even upon physicians and priests, who assist only with the object of giving aid to the wounded or spiritual help to the dying duelist, unless these latter were called after the duel occurred.

All superiors of duelists, even kings and emperors, who fail to prevent a duel, when it is in their power, fall under the same censure.

Prize-fighters are not duelists, because in the so-called sport, although barbarous and unworthy of Christians, no dangerous weapons are used. Prize-fights nevertheless are strictly prohibited by Clement VIII, as non-fatal duels. Honorable people should keep away from such inhuman sport. A distinction must be made, however, between prize-fights and boxing-matches. The latter are usually rough but not degrading contests of strength.

War. War is a combat between the armies of two or more sovereign states or nations. It is offensive or aggressive, if it is declared by any nation to vindicate the honor of the country, or to redress some serious injury; and it is defensive, if it is undertaken to protect the country against an unjust aggressor.

Civil authorities, and all those who by their vote co-operate with them in an unjust attack upon a neighboring country, and those who instigate such aggression by publications or speeches, are guilty of all the deaths caused by the unjust war. If ambition, revenge, or anything else but duty to their country or their God is the motive, such authorities, be they kings, emperors, presidents or others in supreme power in a country, as well as their abettors, are all liable before God; and if such murderers go unpunished by men, the just God, Who looks into

the hearts of rulers, will require the blood of their victims at their hands.

It is obvious that a defensive war is licit, for it is lawful to repel forcible aggression, provided the enemy have not the clear and just right to take what belongs to him, or the right to exact a compensation for injury done to him. In the case of an offensive war, the aggressor must first have demanded what is justly due him or satisfaction for insults or injury, and justice must have been refused him, before an appeal to arms would be licit.

Offensive wars were condemned by the Manicheans as illicit, under all circumstances; the Wickliffites taught that war is forbidden to all Christians, and Luther must have adopted their opinion, for he condemned those who fought the Turks, alleging that God avenged by means of the Turks' cruelties, the iniquities of the Christians. There are others that condemn aggressive wars, alleging that as an individual is not allowed to take by force what is evidently his due, neither can one nation force a settlement from another. But the case is different. An individual has recourse to the tribunals of his country to demand that the guilty be punished and that compensation be made for unjust damages to life or property. To whom can a nation appeal? There is no redress, if reparation of insults and compensation for losses are refused, save recourse to arbitration or to arms. Christian princes and Christian governments should have recourse in such extreme cases to arbitration and choose some disinterested power as an umpire, preferably the Sovereign Pontiff, the supreme arbiter and the divinely constituted interpreter of all natural and just positive law. "Hear the Church," is a duty imposed upon all Christian princes and rulers as well as upon individuals, in matters spiritual; and should we think differently when there is question of avenging insult or of demanding reparation for injustice? So long as the governments of the world ignore the supreme jurisdiction of the Church, and cannot agree upon an arbiter to settle all disputes, wars are inevitable. Even aggressive war is in itself justifiable, but only on the following conditions: 1st, that the aggressor have supreme authority in the land; 2nd, that there be a just cause, i. e., that satisfaction for the insult cannot otherwise be obtained or that compensation for damages have been refused; 3rd, that the evil consequences of leaving the injury unpunished, be greater than the foreseen horrors of the war; 4th, that there be a right motive for beginning hostilities, and that the aggressors be not impelled by hatred, vainglory, by a spirit of revenge, or by a desire of sordid private gain, etc.; 5th, that proper rules of warfare be observed, by strictly adhering to previous treaties

and international law; 6th, the nefarious doctrine highly proclaimed in some quarters as patriotic, that the extension of the limits of the realm, the glory of the empire, kingdom or republic, commercialism, or the ambition to extend one's country's commerce, the fear of the growing ascendancy and influence of a neighboring country, etc., are just causes for an aggessive war, is nothing more nor less than preaching the lawfulness of brigandage and piracy, according to the expression of St. Augustine, or holding that might is right; 7th, as to the merits of an offensive or defensive war, the aggressor must be morally certain that justice is on his side, whilst the defender needs only a probably just cause, and the reason is that "melior est conditio possidentis" (Possession is nine points of the law). If two dispute the ownership of some property, no one can deprive the possessor of it, unless the adverse claimant establishes a superior right thereto.

Is the flagrant oppression of the people or tyrannical government in a neighboring country a sufficient cause for intervention? The Syllabus of errors condemned by Pius IX has the following proscribed error, No. 42: "The so-called principle of non-intervention is to be proclaimed and acted upon." From this and from the allocution of the same Pontiff of Sept. 28, 1860, we deduce that, since we are bound to succor our neighbors in great need, intervention is not only lawful, but sometimes obligatory, and a strong power may resort to war, when all other means have failed, to free the subjects of another nation from oppression and tyranny; but the rules of an aggressive war explained above, must be strictly followed.

Hatred. "Whosoever hates his brother, is a murderer." (1 John iii. 15). Intense and deliberate hatred is always a mortal sin, because it is directly contrary to the virtue of charity, which commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Anger. Not only are all kinds of fighting and quarreling, hatred, envy, jealousy of another's good and revenge forbidden, because they are incentives to injure our neighbor and may finally lead to murder, but even simple anger is clearly prohibited and condemned. Christ Himself has taught us: "But I say to you that whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment, and whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be in danger of the council, and whosoever shall say, 'thou fool,' shall be guilty of hell-fire." (Matt.

v. 22). There were three courts among the Jews, one of three members for suits relating to property; one of twenty-three members, for serious crimes, like homicide or murder; and a third of seventy-two members, for offenses against religion or the state. The least sin is simple anger; an insulting word is more grievous; and the most insulting word, "thou fool," said in anger, deserves the greatest punishment. These specific sins are not necessarily mortal sins; for the gravity depends on the interior disposition and the circumstances. All anger is not sinful, for all those constituted in authority have a just cause for anger, if their subjects wilfully omit their duties and otherwise commit serious faults. But even in that case superiors should resort to anger, not from passion, but from a sense of duty which obliges them in conscience to correct those under their charge.

Murder of Innocents. It is a crime to kill a child to save its mother, or to accelerate the death of a mother in order to save the child or to administer Baptism to it. It is not allowed to take medicine or to administer it to the dying in order to hasten their death, even with the intention of preventing greater suffering. The reason is that no evil may be done that good may result therefrom. The end does not justify the means. There is another class of murder of innocents that cries to heaven for vengeance, and that is the murder of unborn infants. To cause their death directly can never be allowed, no matter what the excuse may be, even if it be to save the mother from shame or death. How many unborn infants will be forever deprived of the sight of God and the joys of heaven, through the crime of unnatural mothers, physicians and accomplices! Happily such malpractice is commonly forbidden by civil laws in civilized countries. In most cases the practice is true murder, and those guilty of it cannot escape the merited name of murderers of innocents.

359. What are we commanded by the fifth commandment?

We are commanded by the fifth commandment to live in peace and union with our neighbor, to respect his rights, to seek his spiritual and bodily welfare and to take proper care of our own life and health.

The fifth commandment is not only negative but also

affirmative; for it commands the practice of the virtues opposed to what it forbids. When it forbids injury to human life and all that may lead to it, it commands the conservation of our own as well as of our neighbor's life, and the practice of all the virtues that tend to the bodily welfare and preservation of man, as an individual and as a social being.

1. The first thing, then, that this commandment imposes, is the preservation of our own life by promoting all that contributes to the health and strength of our body and of our soul. Hence, moderation is enjoined in the matter of food and drink. Sleep and healthful exercise are imperative for relaxation and recreation of the body and of the mind. The precept also commands the care of the supernatural life of the soul, for "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." This duty implies instruction, correction, good example and the practice of all the virtues of our state of life.

2. It commands the care of the bodily and spiritual welfare of our neighbor and especially of those under our charge. "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Christian charity will easily overcome self-love or egoism, it counsels disinterestedness, magnanimity and sacrifices for the welfare of others. This precept has been fully explained in previous lessons.

3. Peace with our neighbor, peace between two or more neighbors, peace between nations must be nurtured and guarded by every individual and by all those in power, as far as they are able. Peace between individuals, between families and nations, is disturbed by sordid selfishness, commercialism and ambition. We should rejoice at our neighbor's happiness, feel our neighbor's misfortune as our own, and wish him whatever we wish for ourselves.

4. Meekness and humility should take the place of anger, hatred and revenge. "Learn of Me," says the Lord, "because I am meek and humble of heart." The

duty of forgiveness and of prayer for our persecutors has been fully considered in No. 223.

Scandal. The fifth commandment: Thou shalt not kill, prohibits not only the destruction of our neighbor's natural life, but also spiritual murder, the murder of the supernatural life of our neighbor's soul, and all that may lead to it, viz., all scandal. "Woe to the world because of scandal," says the Lord, and again: "But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone be hanged about his neck and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matt. xviii. 2, 6).

Now what is scandal? It is an unbecoming word or deed that may be an occasion of another's spiritual ruin. Hence, we conclude that it is not necessary that a sin be committed, for it is sufficient that an act have the appearance of sin: e. g., one may be excused from the law of abstinence even on Good Friday. For a healthy-looking man, so dispensed, it would be scandal to eat meat publicly on a day of abstinence, unless he explains why he does not abstain. A carpenter, a tailor, or any other tradesman may be obliged for a serious cause to work on Sunday, but he should avoid doing it publicly, if possible.

There are several kinds of scandal: (a) intended or direct; (b) indirect scandal; and (c) pharisaical scandal.

(a) Direct scandal is that by which one intends to make another fall into sin. This kind may be given by solicitation, gestures or deeds, e. g., the case of a lewd woman who by her immodest dress allures to sin. This scandal is rightly called diabolical, because it is peculiarly proper to the devil.

(b) Indirect scandal is that which is not maliciously intended, but which may still lead others into sin. Is this scandal always sinful? We should distinguish: (1) if the word or deed is in itself sinful, it is plain that it can never be allowed, and even a venial sin may on account of the scandal become mortal: e. g., parents

may by their frequent and vain use of the name of God be cause of their children's blasphemy; again: if they foresee the evil influence, it would be a mortal sin for parents to dress immodestly or indulge in improper conversation in the presence of their children. (2) If the word or deed be neither good nor bad, but indifferent, and if we foresee that scandal is likely to result, we are still bound to abstain from it, unless we can do so without serious injury to ourselves or to others; for charity towards our neighbor demands that we should forego our own pleasure or our own convenience to save others from sin. But we are not allowed to neglect our serious obligations in order to prevent another's sin; e. g., a beautiful woman should not wholly abstain from Mass on days of obligation, although she is aware that some person may by her charms or beauty become guilty of the sin of concupiscence; however, she would be excused for a short period, from the obligation of hearing Mass on Sundays, if she were conscious that her presence in church is an occasion of sin in others.

(c) Pharisaical scandal is so called because he, that gives it, is neither directly nor indirectly the cause of the sin, which arises solely from the malice of the wicked who take the scandal. Such was the scandal of the Pharisees, who blamed the disciples of our Lord for not conforming to the Pharisees' traditional customs, such as never to eat without first observing the ceremony of washing the hands. The Pharisees were also scandalized because our Lord ate with those whom they regarded as sinners. Likewise some ignorant and prejudiced Protestants are scandalized, because Catholics honor and invoke the Blessed Virgin, the saints, etc. This kind of scandal can be imputed only to the one who takes it, but in no wise to him who gives it.

Is scandal a mortal sin? Scandal is venial or mortal according to the malice of the deed to which it induces. He that advises another to tell a lie in order to avoid some punishment, would sin only venially; but he that

by word or gesture counsels perjury, is himself guilty of perjury, and is therefore guilty of a grievous sin.

361. What is the sixth commandment?

The sixth commandment is: Thou shalt not commit adultery.

The most heinous offense that can be committed against our neighbor, after murder and homicide, is the sin of adultery, and, therefore, after the commandment: Thou shalt not kill, the next commandment is: Thou shalt not commit adultery. Adultery violates the holy union existing between married people, and no Christian spouse can regard any other humiliation so shameful as the alienation of that legitimate love which constitutes the pride and happiness of both husband and wife, as long as they remain conscions of their mutual fidelity. This commandment is prohibitory in so far as it forbids all sin against the virtue of chastity, and it is mandatory, in so far as it commands us to be pure and chaste in all our thoughts, desires, words and actions.

Adultery, says the Roman Catechism, is the defilement of the lawful marriage bed, whether it be one's own or another's: if a married man have criminal intercourse with an unmarried woman, he violates the integrity of his own marriage bed; and if an unmarried man have intercourse with a married woman, he defiles the sanctity of the marriage bed of another. We conclude, therefore, that when unlawful intercourse takes place between two married people, both the guilty husband and the guilty wife defile the sanctity of their own as well as that of another's marriage bed, and both commit, besides the grievous sin against the virtue of chastity, two other heinous sins of injustice: one by violating the rights of his or her own spouse, and a second sin of injustice by violating the marriage bed of another. Thus the sin of injustice which makes the sin of adultery particularly heinous, springs from the violation of the marriage contract. If, as the Apostle teaches, they who are joined in wedlock are so subject to each other, that neither has power or right over his or her body, but both are bound, as it were, by a mutual bond of subjection, and if therefore the husband must accomodate himself to the will of the wife and the wife to the will of the husband, most certainly, if either break the contract of mutual subjection, the offender is guilty

of an act of flagrant injustice, and of a grievous crime. (1 Cor. vii. 4). Adultery likewise brands the guilty perpetrators with infamy: "He that is an adulterer," says Solomon, "for the folly of his heart shall destroy his own soul; he gathereth to himself shame and dishonor, and his reproach shall not be blotted out." (Prov. vi. 32).

The grievousness of the sin of adultery may be easily inferred from the severity of its punishment. According to the law promulgated by God in the Old Testament, the adulterer was condemned to be stoned to death (Lev. xx. 10); and even for the criminal passion of one man, not only the perpetrators of the crime, but also, as we read of the Sichemites, the inhabitants of an entire city have been destroyed. (Gen. xxxiv. 25). The Sacred Scriptures abound in examples of the divine vengeance on the sins of impurity, such as the destruction of Sodom and of the neighboring cities, the punishment of the Israelites on account of their sinful intercourse with the daughters of Moab, and the slaughter of the Benjamites.

The punishment of death, may, it is true, not always await such crimes; but they do not therefore entirely escape the visitations of divine wrath. The mind of the adulterer is frequently a prey to agonizing torture: blinded by his own infatuation—the heaviest chastisement which can fall upon a sinner—he disregards his Maker, his reputation, his honor, his family and even his life; and thus, utterly abandoned and useless, he is undeserving of any confidence in any matter of importance, and incompetent in the discharge of any serious duty. Of this depravity we find signal examples in David and Solomon. David had no sooner fallen into the crime of adultery, than he degenerated into a character the very reverse of what he had been before: from the mildest of men, he became a monster of cruelty, for he consigned to death Uriah, a man who had deserved well of him; while Solomon, having abandoned himself to the lust of women, forsook the true religion to follow that of strange gods. This sin, therefore, as Osee observes, plucks out the heart and often blinds the understanding. (Osee, iv. 11). (Cf. Rom. Cat.)

362. What is forbidden by the sixth commandment?

The sixth commandment forbids all unchaste freedom with another's wife or husband; also all immodesty

with ourselves or others in looks, dress, words, or actions.

All the actions enumerated by the catechism are sins against the holy virtue of chastity, and if deliberate, are always mortal sins, for there is no slightness of matter in sins of impurity. The reason of this uniform gravity is that the concupiscence of the flesh is the most dangerous enemy of our salvation, and the least indulgence of the insidious passion of lust will surely lead to the most shameful unchaste sins. Even wilful impure thoughts or wilful unchaste representations in our mind, are always mortal sins, because they open wide the door to evil desires and unchaste sensations: victory over the passion of lust lies in flight; neither prayer nor the Sacraments are of any avail, unless we shun the near occasions of impurity. Every species of impurity and all violations of chastity, are included in the prohibition: thou shalt not commit adultery. "Fornication," says St. Paul, "and all uncleanness and covetousness let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints." (Ephes. v. 3). "Neither fornicators nor adulterers nor the effeminate, nor liers with mankind, shall possess the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. vi. 9). Even unchaste looks, not to mention all the shameful vices of impurity, are likewise forbidden by this commandment; for our Blessed Lord warns us that "whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matt. v. 27, 28).

363. Does the sixth commandment forbid the reading of bad and immoral books and newspapers?

The sixth commandment does forbid the reading of bad and immoral books and newspapers.

Our wily enemy, Satan, knowing that lust is of all man's passions the most dangerous to his salvation, seeks by all means in his power to excite it in us, and since a direct temptation to impurity would often fail

with God-fearing people, he employs crafty means to allure the unwary. Among those means are immodest songs, books, periodicals, indecent pictures, paintings and statues, immodest shows, theaters and dances, and all other dangerous amusements, which if not sins in themselves, are by their very nature occasions of sins of impurity. We have learned that we must avoid all the near occasions of sin, and immodest amusements or pastimes are such proximate occasions, and therefore sinful. Indelicate and lascivious songs, immodest theatrical performances and dances, suggestive or obscene books and pictures cannot fail to awaken unchaste thoughts, criminal desires and lewd sensations, and should therefore be cautiously shunned as incentives to licentiousness and turpitude. (R. C.)

364. What are we commanded by the sixth commandment?

We are commanded by the sixth commandment to be pure in thought and modest in all our looks and actions.

By this answer we understand that we must be chaste interiorly and exteriorly, i. e., in mind and in body; the sense of the answer will be better understood from a clearer knowledge of the virtue of chastity, which we all are bound to practice during our lives on earth. St. Thomas (II. 2, q. 151, a. 1) teaches us that the word chastity (Castitas) comes from "chastise" (castigare), because by that virtue the concupiscence of the flesh is chastised, controlled, repressed or smothered; hence, the following definition is in accordance with the teaching of the Angelic Doctor: chastity is a moral virtue, which represses the concupiscence of the flesh within the limits of sound reason. This definition applies to all kinds of chastity, including conjugal chastity. Chastity is a virtue because it moderates the unchaste sensual appetite, which is fed by being gratified and grows stronger through indulgence, like a capricious child abandoned to its own will. Hence, it is

necessary to repress that concupiscence which regards the conservation of our species, as it is the most violent of all sensual appetites (ib. a. 2). Let no one think that unchaste thoughts or desires, being interior only, are not comprised among the sensual appetites; for they also have their source in an inordinate concupiscence, and as such, they are opposed to the virtue of chastity, and, moreover, impure thoughts lead to impure desires and the latter seek satisfaction in lustful acts.

There are several kinds of chastity: (a) virginal chastity or the chastity of those who from infancy have kept their angelic purity unsullied and undefiled. By impure venial sins and by grievous interior sins of thought and desire, provided they have been remitted, virginal chastity is not forfeited; but it is totally lost by a wilful defilement of the body which constitutes a mortal sin. (b) Conjugal chastity is proper to married people who abstain from all voluptuousness which is not authorized by their state of life. (c) Continency is that chastity which belongs to those, who having lived in the married state, refrain from a second marriage, or having remained single, have either vowed or resolved not to marry.

Excellence of chastity. a) The Apostle tells us: "This is the will of God, your sanctification; that you should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel (body) in sanctification and honor: not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles that know not God." (Thess. iv. 4, 5). St. Paul undoubtedly here teaches that sanctification, to which we should all aspire, is principally obtained by abstaining from fornication, and from all sins that defile the body, and that we should resist the passion of lust to which the Gentiles were addicted. There are many virtues which contribute to our sanctity; but St. Paul attributes this prerogative especially to the virtue of chastity. b) Chastity makes us saints and equal to the saints, but it does more: it makes us in some manner equal to the angels, and, therefore, it is rightly called the angelic virtue. How eloquently and truthfully have the saints spoken of Christian chastity and of the esteem we should have for that beautiful virtue; but none perhaps more admirably than St. John Chrysostom, when he compares the chastity of virgins with the purity of angels: "The angels," he says "do not marry nor have they any wives; they are not made of flesh and blood; they do not dwell on the earth, they are not subject to a troublesome concupiscence; they have no need of food or drink; they are not constituted in such a manner that an agreeable sound, a melodious song, an at-

tractive form can seduce them; in a word no kind of attraction can captivate them. But man, because of his being inferior to those blessed spirits, has to summon all his strength and all his zeal to imitate them as much as lies in him . . . Do you now grasp the excellence of virginity and how it makes the inhabitants of this earth, who are clothed with a body, perfect and similar to the incorporeal spirits?" He then compares Elias, Eliseus and John to the celestial spirits, and concludes that the former, because of their inferior condition, deserve the greater praise for having lived angelic lives among corporeal beings, subject to the temptations of a rebellious nature.

Licentiousness obscures and blinds the mind and renders it incapable of understanding the things that are of God; whilst purity of heart and body ennobles, enlightens and elevates the soul to the contemplation of divine things. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 152, a. 2, 4). How chastity disposes us, even in this world, to a union with God and renders us similar to the angels, is thus clearly explained. Hence follows the fitting reward promised by our Lord in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God"; for those who contemplate and see God in all things here below, will be recompensed by a clearer sight of the divine essence, when it shall be revealed to them through the Beatific Vision.

Means to Preserve Chastity. Only faith can teach us that the virtue of chastity is so eminently beautiful, that the sins opposed to it should not so much as be named amongst us, or even be thought of in secret; therefore, the wisest among the pagan philosophers of old could understand and praise only that chastity which consists in avoiding those execrable and shameful vices, that dishonor the guilty in the eyes of their fellow-men. It never occurred to the Pharisees and doctors of the law among the Jewish people, to stigmatize unchaste thoughts and desires, as opposed to the law of God. Only a Virgin God-Man, born of a Virgin Mother, could inculcate the law of chastity in all its perfection and pre-eminent sanctity: only from Him, His prophets, disciples and from His unsullied Spouse, the Church, can we learn the means of preserving the angelic virtue.

1. The first means to preserve chastity is to avoid all persons who might rob us of it: these persons are especially women with respect to men, and vice versa. "Gaze not upon the maiden," says Ecclesiasticus, "less her beauty be a stumbling-block to thee . . . For many have perished by the beauty of a woman, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire . . . Many by admiring the beauty of another man's wife, have become reprobates, for her conversation burneth as fire. Sit not at all with another man's wife, etc." (Eccli. ix. 9, sq.) To this

we may add other dangers to the virtue of chastity, such as theatres, dances and outings taken in vehicles by young people in company with those of another sex, especially when such rides are prolonged after dark, a custom but too prevalent in this country.

2. Another means to preserve chastity consists in the mortification of the flesh (Cf. No. 369), which often becomes necessary to overcome the carnal inclinations of a depraved nature. This means includes the placing of a strict guard over the five senses: the hearing, the sight, the taste, the smell and the touch; all these are obstacles to sanctity and chastity, unless they be kept under control. Fasts, watchings and various modes of chastising the body are to be recommended, but they should not be excessive to the extent of injuring one's health or making one incapable of attending to the obligations of his state of life. "I chastise my body," writes the Apostle, "and bring it into subjection" (1 Cor. ix. 27), and the Lord was pleased with his mortification, for when St. Paul begged Him for freedom from the assaults against purity and chastity, He answered the prayer by saying: "My grace is sufficient for thee." (2 Cor. xii. 9).

3. Immodesty in looks or dress should be scrupulously avoided: "Look not round about thee in the ways of the city," says again Ecclesiasticus," nor wander up and down in the streets thereof. Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not upon another's beauty." (Eccli. ix. 7, 8).

4. The means already enumerated would be useless to preserve chastity unless humility, or a consciousness of our weakness, accompanied our best efforts. Humility will teach us to shun all the proximate occasions of sin. Without humility, says Cassian, we cannot triumph over any vice; for pride makes the most virtuous men presumptuous; they court danger, and he that loves danger will perish therein. Prudence and humility go hand in hand and the prudent man will studiously avoid: (a) idleness, which gives rise to all temptations, but especially to those against the angelic virtue. It caused the degradation of the Sodomites (Ezech. xvi. 49). (b) Excess in eating and drinking feeds the concupiscence of the flesh. "Be not drunk with wine," says St. Paul, "wherein is luxury" (Ephes. v. 18). (c) The concupiscence of the eyes, or the want of watchfulness over them, has been the cause of thousands of deplorable falls, e. g.., of David (2 Kings xi. 2), of the King of Sichem (Gen. xxiv. 2). Therefore Job made a covenant with his eyes that he would not so much as think on a virgin. (Job, xxxi. 1).

5. The humble Christian distrusts his own power of re-

sisting the temptations of carnal lust, and puts his whole confidence in God.

He knows also that chastity is a gift of God and that God alone can preserve it by His grace; therefore, he has recourse to fervent prayer, fully convinced that God will hear his supplications. He will pray like St. Augustine who cried out: "O Lord, Thou commandest continency, give what Thou commandest and command what Thou wilt"; or like St. Paul, who, when he was assailed by violent temptations, besought our Lord thrice to remove the sting of carnal lust; but the good God taught him the lesson that temptations are trials to prove the fidelity of those who strive for the mastery, and that His grace is sufficient. (2 Cor. xii. 17). When the waves of carnal lust are about to engulf us, let us cry from the heart, but from a heart full of confidence: "Lord, save us, we perish," and God will command the tempest and calm will soon ensue. (Matt. viii. 25, sq.)

6. Prayer alone without recourse to the Sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist would be inefficacious. Prayer, we have seen, is all-powerful, provided the principal means of grace be not neglected. Therefore, those who desire to be chaste and to live an angel's life, must frequently have recourse to the Bread of Angels, the body and blood of the Saviour. Let frequent or daily Communion become general among the Christian people, and virginity, continency and chastity, and all other Christian virtues will bloom like the lilies in a well-cultivated garden, surrounded by other choice flowers, instead of licentiousness and immorality now reigning supreme in modern society, like weeds, thorns and thistles in a neglected park, which stifle every beautiful flower and rare plant.

LESSON THE THIRTY-FOURTH

FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE END OF THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

365. What is the seventh commandment?

The seventh commandment is: Thou shalt not steal.

366. What are we commanded by the seventh commandment?

By the seventh commandment we are commanded to give to all men what belongs to them and to respect their property.

The seventh commandment, in the form of a prohibition, is the basic reason of the right to ownership of property. God, Who has the supreme dominion over all He has made, establishes the justice of property ownership and defends it against the covetousness of the wicked. Socialism, which denies all right to private possession and ownership, and transfers it from the individual to the state, subverts the order and justice established by the Creator, and, therefore, socialism is but systematic robbery. The axiom of the socialists: "property is theft," besides opening wide the door to spoliation, brigandage, murder and all kinds of lawlessness, is blasphemous, for it proclaims a doctrine diametrically opposed to the seventh commandment. Might is not right and never will be, and expropriation without compensation, even by the supreme authority of the state, will forever remain in the eyes of all people, sound of mind and heart, a flagrant injustice, an organized brigandage and a concerted piracy.

The right of property is supreme and anterior to all legislation: it is divine. Reason teaches it and conscience calls it justice, it is true; but who infused into the hearts of all men this conviction that man has the right to his property and that it is unjust to deprive him of it, but God, Who has implanted the natural law in the heart of man and wills that this law should be our guide in all transactions with our fellow-men? When the natural light of our reason condemns theft, in all its forms, it is the voice of the same God, Who proclaimed from Mount Sinai but in a solemn manner, the commandment: Thou shalt not steal.

367. What is forbidden by the seventh commandment?

The seventh commandment forbids all unjust taking or keeping what belongs to another.

There are many ways by which a person can be unjustly deprived of his earthly goods; but the catechism

gives us the two general divisions of theft; for it either consist in taking or in keeping unjustly what belongs to another. He who keeps another's property, although it may not have come into his possession through any fault of his, becomes a thief, as soon as he becomes aware that it belongs to another and takes no means to notify the owner, if known, or to find the owner, if unknown. In all cases of stray property and of money and other valuables that have been found, the finder should follow the local civil laws, if he cannot find the owner within a reasonable time. If stray animals have caused any serious damage to the property of the finder, he may claim compensation before delivering them. In all such occurrences, let both him that has found and him that has lost any property, eschewing covetousness, remember the precept of our Lord: "Do unto others as you wish others to do unto you." If the case is a peculiar one and a solution seems difficult, recourse should be had to the parish priest, to one's confessor or to some other learned and God-fearing man.

To steal is theft, but as there are many ways of stealing, so there are many kinds of theft; but all can be reduced to these three heads: simple theft or larceny, robbery or rapine, and fraud. He who steals clandestinely, without aggravating circumstances, commits theft or larceny; he who in stealing uses force or threats, commits robbery; and he who steals by deceiving his fellow-man commits fraud. Robbery has a greater malice than theft, for it adds contumely and often insult to theft; but fraud is the most mischievous, because it is premeditated and easily becomes a habit; it is difficult to guard against, and often remains unpunished for a time, as that particular crime is not easily detected.

1. To simple theft or larceny, belongs pilfering or petty theft. This is often resorted to by people who are afraid of stealing large sums, but have no scruple to steal small sums repeatedly. Small sums, they think, will not be missed, e. g., if they only take five or ten

cents a day from their employer; others excuse the crime by saying that their wages are smaller than they deserve or that their wages are not sufficient for their support. Ten cents is a very small amount, but if the pilferer intends to continue the practice, he commits a grievous sin every time he steals even a small amount, for small sums in the aggregate, if often repeated, amount to a large sum. The laborer who idles away his time and slights his work, when the employer is absent, is a species of pilferer.

2. To this class of robbers belong the masters who withhold a portion of their laborers' salary. This is a sin that cries to heaven for vengeance. We need not speak of robbery by lawless men, called highway-robbery, nor of robbery by breaking and entering, called burglary, nor of brigandage or piracy; all these make those guilty of them outlaws, criminals against the law and society, and murderers, at least in intent if not in fact. Those who buy stolen goods without discrimination, or second-hand dealers, who buy all goods, even if they suspect the unjust origin of them, are robbers, as they become partners in the crime of thieves and robbers.

Usurers are a kind of robbers, if they take advantage of their fellow-man's straightened circumstances to exact a greater interest than the laws of charity or the state allow, or than is usual among conscientious and virtuous people. To lend and exact something above what had been lent, was strictly forbidden to the Jews and was also condemned by several important decrees of the Church; but the Church accomodates her decisions to circumstances and times. The eternal laws of God cannot change, and neither can the Church alter those laws nor the principles that directly flow from them: but the application of the law may differ, because circumstances often change, so that what is contrary to justice at one time, may be perfectly licit at another time and in other circumstances. When lending money with the intention of receiving more than had been lent was forbidden, it was the poor man who borrowed; now the very rich are the principal borrowers: the banks, wealthy speculators, those engaged in commerce and industry, and especially public and private corporations. It is admitted as a principle that the lender can exact something

more than he lent, on account of the loss to himself caused by the loan. The use of money is to-day of great value and, therefore, is computable. Other reasons, like the danger of losing the principal and the difficulty and expense in recovering the loan, the universal practice among all classes of people sanctioned by the State, etc., now make the lending of money, at a moderate interest, perfectly legitimate.

Usurers are those lenders who exact interest from the poor, whom they are in charity bound to help, and those lenders who demand an exorbitant interest. But to determine what interest violates justice and right, depends again on circumstances and place. In general practice, the agreed interest should not exceed the legal interest fixed by the State as legal interest, in case no interest is mentioned in the agreement. Among usurers may be classed those who, individually or in concert with others, buy up the necessities of life and when they have cornered the market, as it is called, sell at a greatly advanced price.

3. Fraud adds to theft deceit of our neighbor. Among those who sin by fraud are they who have one weight and measure for buying and another for selling, those who employ in selling a smaller measure or weight than the one fixed by custom or the State, those who cheat by misrepresenting or by adulterating their goods, those who do not fulfill their verbal or written contracts or substitute inferior material for the one agreed upon, those who coin or circulate false money, those who deny material facts in obtaining life-insurances, or who wilfully injure themselves in order to obtain payment of an accident policy, or who wilfully destroy through arson chattels or buildings to get the insurance, etc. Those also are guilty of deceit and theft who make false returns to their employers or who sell their employers' goods at a higher price and pocket the difference. Those who borrow under false pretenses or who do not pay their debts when able to do so, or invent a thousand false excuses for not paying them, are likewise thieves. Still more wicked among the same class are those who fraudulently swear to false accounts in bankruptcy.

4. More depraved still than the foregoing are those who out of spite and hatred cause damage to their

neighbor's cattle, horses, crops or other property. They commit a double sin, one against charity—and they remain in the state of sin as long as the passion of hatred or revenge fills their breast—and another against justice. There is only one class of criminals more guilty than those before God, and they are anarchists, brigands and pirates, who will besides resort to violence and murder to accomplish their satanical purposes.

368. Are we bound to restore ill-gotten goods?

We are bound to restore ill-gotten goods, or the value of them, as far as we are able; otherwise we cannot be forgiven.

1. We have already spoken of the restitution of property which has come into our possession through no fault of ours, and we have learned how and in what manner we are bound in that case to restore our neighbor's goods, according to the general rule or axiom: "res clamat domino suo" (a thing calls for its owner). We should remark here that if the property which has come into our possession through no fault of ours, be stolen by another, or if the thing perish whilst in our possession and we have employed due care in finding the owner, we are not bound to restitution.

2. Ill-gotten goods have to be restored if possible, and if it is not possible, e. g., if the goods have been stolen again or have perished, although through no fault of the unlawful possessor, the value of the goods must be restored; for justice demands that no one may be deprived of his own or be injured through another's injustice. If any one fail to make restitution when the case demands it, he cannot be forgiven, for he remains obstinately in his sin of injustice until restitution has been made. But in the supposition that he has no means to make restitution, what must he do? He must sincerely desire to make restitution, and that desire must be efficacious and not stop at a fruitless wish. He must retrench from his income whatever is not strictly neces-

sary for the support of himself and of his family, and from his savings make due restitution. If the restitution cannot be done personally, it should be done through a third person, a friend or a priest, or in the case of a dying man, he must see to it that his heirs will make restitution or do it by bequest in his will if he leaves any property after him. If the party to whom the restitution is to be made cannot be found, the equivalent of the debt should be given to the poor or spent for pious purposes; for no one may enrich himself through injustice. In all difficulties regarding restitution, the faithful should consult their confessors.

369. Are we obliged to repair the damage we have unjustly caused?

We are bound to repair the damage we have unjustly caused.

Every injustice demands reparation: a wilful injury done to a neighbor must be compensated, and this obligation extends to all the consequences of the damage done, if they were at least obscurely foreseen. The wicked man who deliberately kills his neighbor's horse and thereby prevents him from cultivating his land and sowing his crops, must pay full value of the horse and all the injury done to his neighbor by depriving him of the use of his animal; the murderer who kills a father, the support of the family, must, if he wishes to be forgiven, not only sincerely repent of his crime, but also compensate, as far as he can, the wife and children of the murdered man for all their losses caused by his horrible and nefarious deed.

On accomplices. The duty of restitution and of compensation for injuries binds not only the actual thief and the principal perpetrator of the injury done to a neighbor, but also those who effectively co-operate in any injustice. Among the co-operators there are several classes: 1. Those who command (imperantes), i. e., those who are placed in authority, like fathers and mothers, and who order their children to steal or to cause injury to others or to their property. These are more criminal than the perpetrators of the deed and are

equally bound to restitution. 2. Those who instigate a wrong (suasores), or advise or incite others to execute it, are almost equally guilty with the principals and therefore are also bound to make good the loss or damage. 3. The consenting party or parties (consentientes) are those who by their voice or authoritative assent approve the misdeed, or by their silence do not prevent it if they can; for silence is often equivalent to consent. If their vote or consent concurred in the perpetration of the crime, restitution is imperative. 4. The participants (participantes) are those who directly share in committing the crime, like those who break open the doors or who hold the ladder by which the thief enters a house or gains access to the premises to be robbed or injured; also those who stand guard or in any way give direct aid to the principal actors. They share equally in the guilt with the principals and are equally bound to restitution. 5. Those who do not prohibit (non-prohibentes), or who do not prevent the perpetration of an unjustice, when they can do so without serious danger to themselves, are bound to make restitution, if their duty obliged them to prevent the theft or injury; such are all superiors who could prevent the wrong-doing, but fail to do so; likewise, servants who have the care of the provisions or any of their master's valuables, if they allow their fellow-servants or others, to steal or damage their master's goods; they not only sin mortally in matters of great importance, but they must repair all the damage done through their negligence, if the culprits themselves will not do so. The same must be said of watchmen, policemen and all those who are paid a salary to perform the duty of care-takers, together with their other obligations. A cook is supposed to take care of provisions he or she uses, a butler of the beverages, plate, etc., a groom of his master's horses. Wilful negligence, which occasions injury to the property under their charge, would impose restitution. 6. They who do not indicate or reveal (non-indicantes) the perpetrators of a crime, when duty obliges them to do so, are guilty before God. As the criminal act is supposed to have already been done, they fail only in their duty of denouncing the guilty one, and are not bound to restitution, unless by a previous compact between the principal and his associates, the latter had agreed not to divulge the crime, although in duty bound to arrest or punish criminals. 7. Another class are the keepers (custodes), i. e., they who indirectly assist in carrying out a theft or in causing damage to their neighbor's personal property, by harboring the malefactors, by screening them from arrest, or by buying under agreement the stolen goods, etc. These are co-operators with the principals, and in default of restitution by the latter, are bound to make good the loss themselves; but this

obligation does not fall on those who, out of compassion, harbor a criminal after the commission of the wrong, in which they neither directly nor indirectly took part.

Solidarity. Effective co-operation in any crime of theft or of wilful injury, imposes solidarity of restitution or reparation of the injury done, i. e., all the effective, real causes of a crime are bound jointly and severally to make restitution; e. g., if five thieves band together to steal, say $100, after the division of the spoils whether equal or not, or even if one keeps for himself the whole amount, all are jointly bound, and each one for the others, to restore the whole amount; and if one or more refuse to contribute their share, the others must make restitution for those who will not. It is true that those who have received a share of the spoils are first bound to restore their ill-gotten goods, but if they fail to do so, the others are not exempt from compensating the owner for all his losses. This rule is applicable to the seven different classes of co-operation in any crime of injustice in which restitution is to be made, but only in so far as the co-operation was effective; for, e. g., if four individuals agree only to steal, and one of them sets a house afire besides, solidarity would not compel the others to make reparation for the damage done by fire.

370. What is the eighth commandment?

The eighth commandment is: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

371. What are we commanded by the eighth commandment?

We are commanded by the eighth commandment to speak the truth in all things, and to be careful of the honor and reputation of every one.

Truth, in the sense of veracity or truthfulness, is a virtue, and as such is the habit of showing or proving oneself by one's life and in one's speech what one really is (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 109, a. 3, to 3); or, briefly, it is the habit of telling the truth. This habit may appear in words or actions. Truthfulness makes a man true or truthful, and Jesus said of Himself: "He that seeketh the glory of Him that sent Him, He is true and there is no injustice in Him." (John vii. 18). A truthful man is disposed to be just to God, to himself and his neigh-

bor, not only in words but also in actions; he gives to all their due, for truth and justice go hand in hand. In him there is no deception or fraud; for fraud, deception and lying open the door to all kinds of injustices.

We must also be careful of the honor and reputation of our neighbor, for "a good name is better than great riches" (Prov. xxii. 1). Truth is a virtue, but truth is acceptable to God only if it be accompanied by humility, justice and charity. All this will appear more fully. when we have considered the sins forbidden by this commandment.

372. What is forbidden by the eighth commandment?

The eighth commandment forbids all rash judgments, back-biting, slanders and lies.

Rash Judgments. A rash judgment is the firm assent of our mind regarding a defect of another, based on slight evidence. It differs from a suspicion, which is only an inclination to think evil of another for insufficient reasons. As long as there is a doubt of the guilt, even if the doubt itself be rash, or based on insufficient evidence, or as long as one suspends his judgment, there is really no rash judgment.

St. Thomas gives the following principal causes or sources of doubts, suspicions and rash judgments: the malice or wickedness which inclines the wicked to malicious suspicions and rash judgments, the ill-feeling of one towards another, and the experience gathered from observation, which makes people form judgments from indications which have often proved to be certain evidences. (Cf. S. Thos. II. 2, q. 60, a. 3).

It is a mortal sin to form a rash judgment imputing to our neighbor serious natural moral defects, for says our Lord: "Judge not, that you may not be judged" (Matt. vii. 1, sq.); but to constitute a mortal sin, the rash judgment must be: a) fully deliberate, i. e., made with the consciousness of its malice and will full consent of the will to form the judgment; b) formed regarding an important defect, which seriously injures the reputation of a definite person or of a

small community; for if the judgment regards a person entirely unknown or known only as a member of a large community, e. g., of a large town, one's private judgment could not seriously affect the reputation of the stranger, or of the inhabitants of the town. The case would be different, if the judgment were formed of a young man or woman known to belong to a prominent family, for in that supposition, the dishonor falls on all the members of the family; c) founded on evidence or proof that is slight, for if the evidence of a serious defect or moral guilt be overwhelming, the judgment ceases to be rash, and if the evidence is absolutely convincing, such judgment is free from all sin.

Although unreasonable suspicions and precipitate doubts are in themselves not mortal sins, nevertheless if they spring from insufficient evidence to form a sound judgment of any person's guilt, they may become so, through hatred or ill-will. This may especially happen, if they cause unjust punishment or reprisals to be inflicted on the suspected person by him who has conceived the doubt or to whom the suspicion is made known. A superior who, through a mere suspicion, curtails the right of an inferior or punishes him, acts unjustly and in matters of importance, sins grievously.

There are, says the Angelic Doctor, three degrees in a suspicion: the first degree is when anyone, for slight reason, begins to doubt the goodness of another; and this is a venial sin only. "Do not judge before the time." (1 Cor. iv. 5). The second is when one judges as certain the guilt of another for slight reasons; and this is a grievous offense in things of importance, because the judgment cannot exist without contempt of neighbor. The third degree is found when one judges on a mere suspicion and proceeds to condemn a man, and this is directly against justice. (St. Thos. II, 2, q. 60, a. 3).

Furthermore, it is the duty of us all to give our neighbor the benefit of a doubt, and to interpret suspicious actions in a manner most favorable to him (l. c. a. 4); and although such charity is not always imposed as a precept, we should at least suspend our judgment about the guilt of anyone until evident proofs are available.

Detraction, backbiting and calumny. Detraction is the unjust and secret blackening of another's reputation. (Cf. St. Thos. II. 2, q. 72, a. 1). To speak of another's faults to a friend or to a superior with a view to his correction, or to give testimony against anyone in a

court of justice, is not unjust, and, therefore, is not detraction; to speak of anyone's faults within his hearing is contumely or reviling, and adds insult to backbiting; to speak of one's own faults, if not done in boasting and in contempt of virtue, but for the sake of humility, is not sinful and is often praiseworthy, as when we accuse ourselves in confession. Detraction or backbiting in its strictest sense is distinguished from calumny or slander by this, that a detractor tells the truth, and that a calumniator or slanderer wilfully lies about his fellowman: both aim to injure the good name of their neighbor, but calumny or slander is the more grievous sin.

Malicious detraction and calumny, in matters of great importance, are by their very nature, mortal sins; for both are sins against charity and justice. It is to be noted, however, that while truthful revelation of another's faults is sometimes lawful and even obligatory, in self-defense, or in defense of others, calumny or slander is never allowed. "A detractor is the abomination of men" (Prov. xxiv. 9), and he is, according to St. Paul, "hateful to God . . . and worthy of death. (Rom. i. 30-32). That the tradition in the Church conforms to Holy Scripture and condemns all kinds of wanton and unjust detraction as an abomination, need hardly be mentioned, for our reason and our whole nature rebels against even the simple detractor who makes free to speak ill or contemptuously of us.

As there are several different ways of backbiting or of slandering another, we add the following: (a) simple detraction, for a just cause, offends neither charity nor justice, if our own good, the good of others or of society at large, or God's honor require it, e. g., if we divulge a secret sin of another for the sake of fraternal correction; or for the sake of asking advice—omitting in that case, if possible, the name of him we defame—or in order to warn others against the pernicious influence of the wicked; or for the sake of denouncing criminals dangerous to the community; or with a view to upholding law and justice, when called as a witness before any legally established court; or if we make known a secret sin of another to the proper ecclesiastical authorities in order to avoid a sacrilege, or in order to prevent the ordination of

an unworthy applicant, or the celebration of an unlawful marriage; etc. In all these cases, if the intention is pure and holy, the defamed person has no right to ask that his reputation be respected; for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the innocent is to be preferred to the good name of the sinner. (b) It is always sinful, and in matters of importance it is a grievous offense, to exaggerate another's defects. Likewise, it is equivalent to calumny materially to diminish the praises given to anyone, by denying them or by attributing selfish or other evil intentions to him who is praised. Although it is not a sin against justice to mention, in the locality where it is known, a crime for which someone has been condemned, or which has otherwise become public, it is nevertheless detraction, if the charge is true, or slander if untrue, to manifest another one of his defects or vices, e. g., if he has been found guilty of theft, and is accused besides of adultery. (c) There are also many other ways of detraction, as by reporting what one knows, as public talk: e. g., "It is said, whether truly or not, I cannot say, that Mrs. B. is not very strict in her morals"; or by insinuation: e. g., "I know Miss D. very well, but I do not wish to injure her good name by saying what I know"; again, "Mr. N. seems to be a good man, and I wonder why no one will trust him," etc.

Is it a sin to listen to a detractor or slanderer? It is undoubtedly sinful to encourage him by asking questions, or by showing any approbation; it is also sinful to rejoice in his detraction or calumny; and if injury be intended to another by any one in our presence, it would be against charity and justice not to prevent it, when it can be done without great inconvenience to ourselves or injury to the listeners. They who lend a willing ear to a detractor, or show no disapprobation are severely reproved by St. Bérnard, who following St. Jerome says: "Whether the detractor or the listener is the more criminal, it is not easy to decide; if there were no listeners there would be no detractors."

Superiors are in duty bound to prevent the detractions or calumnies of their inferiors, but not vice versa, if the inferiors fear the ill-will of their superiors. As to the deplorable custom of gossiping, backbiting and slandering, among acquaintances and friends, it is to be regretted that there are not a sufficient number of charitable and resolute Christians in every community to root out the prevalent evil; the few who detest the vice must unfortunately either eschew the society of their friends or choose

to tolerate the evil: usually, the most that can be done by them is to show that they dislike the evil reports, or to turn the conversation to another subject, or, if several are present, to begin a conversation on a new topic with one of the nearest members of the group. Holy Scripture teaches one of those ways when it says: "The north wind driveth away rain as doth a sad countenance a backbiting tongue." (Prov. xxv. 23). But this counsel of mere silence does not apply to superiors, nor does it suffice in the case of slander or calumny, if the listener is persuaded of the innocence of a slandered neighbor.

On account of the great prevalence of the sin of backbiting, it would seem that he who repeats a defamatory conversation to several people can hardly be judged guilty of a mortal sin of injustice. He is not the original detractor, and the report would most probably spread without him. The one who first spread the news is the only one guilty of a grievous injustice, even when matters of importance are concerned. But the hearers, who delight in the defamation of another's character, as well as he who repeats the evil report, commit sin also, but against charity only. Gossipers and defamers if not always guilty of mortal sin, are seldom free from venial sin.

Contumely, which adds insult to detraction or slander, is the unjust dishonoring of another by words or sign, when he is physically or morally present. By physical presence we understand that the dishonor is done within the hearing of the injured person, and by moral presence, that he is likely to hear of it, whether the guilty one intends so or not: e. g., A may accuse B before his face of being a thief, or he may say the same thing before B's intimate friends, who are most likely to report it to him. In the latter case, if A foresaw or intended that the report would be carried, he is guilty of contumely as well as if he had insulted B to his face. Contumely is a specific sin different from detraction or slander, for the last two injure a person's good name, and the first the honor and respect due to him. But contumely is often joined to detraction or calumny: e. g., A accuses B before his face of a crime he is guilty of, then A is guilty of detraction and of contumely, if there are others present; and if the accusation be false, he is guilty of contumely and calumny. But it would be only

contumelious to accuse him of a crime he is guilty of, with nobody else present. Likewise, if two scolds accuse each other of the worst crimes before a big crowd, they are both guilty of contumelious language only, for the bystanders take it only as a battle of insulting words. Among the different ways of being guilty of contumely, we must include lampoons and caricatures sent in anonymous letters or published in newspapers. This low insult is more degrading to the writer than insulting to the object of the abuse.

By its nature contumely is a mortal sin against justice, for we owe our neighbor respect and honor. The Apostle warns us against this sin, saying: "Loving one another with the charity of brotherhood, with honor preventing one another . . . Render therefore to all men their dues, . . . honor to whom honor." (Rom. xii. 10; xiii. 7). Contumely is only a venial sin when mutual recriminations take place between children, between sisters and brothers, and even between friends, if they impute to each other only trivial faults; but opprobrious or contumelious language towards superiors, or abusive language in anger or hatred, can seldom be free from mortal sin. Let it be remarked that superiors who, from a sense of duty, upbraid their inferiors with their faults, not merely do not sin but only do what is right. Neither do acquaintances or friends sin when they reprimand their equals for some defect, with the intention of correcting them; "for the just man," says David, "shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me." (Ps. cxl. 5). We spoke at length on fraternal correction as an act of charity, when treating of the spiritual works of mercy.

Lies, hypocrisy. There are many kinds of lies: a lie injurious to God or the saints is blasphemy; a lie told to injure our neighbor in his goods is deceit or theft; a lie that injures him in his reputation is slander or calumny. There are also lies of a less heinous character, generally termed jocose or officious lies. This last class although not injurious to another person, may become very injurious to the liar, to his honor and good name, if frequently indulged in. To be called a liar is a great insult, and still there are some who think nothing of a lie. To be a lie and a sin, there must be intent to deceive; and unless the lie may have serious consequences or cause serious injury, it is only a venial sin.

Therefore the Apostle admonishes us of our duty always to tell the truth: "Putting away lying, speak ye the truth." (Ephes. iv. 25). Is the devil not called "the father of lies"? (John viii. 41). The Lord holds lying in abomination; (Prov. vi. 16, sq.), and David seems to exclude liars from heaven: "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle? He that speaketh truth in his heart, who hath not used deceit in his tongue." (Ps. xiv. 1, 3). True, one jocose lie will not forever bar one from entrance into heaven; but he that easily deceives his neighbor by a lie, is likely to cheat in business, in a trade, in buying and selling; indeed, considered in their consequences, lies may have serious evil effects, pernicious to the individual and to society.

The Roman Catechism calls attention to deceit practiced by well-meaning friends and relatives on those in danger of death, and even on the dying. It happens that for fear of aggravating the danger of the sick person, they try to persuade him that the sickness is not serious and that he is improving, and tell him to be of good spirits, in spite of the fact that they know there is little hope of his recovery. The priest is not called, the patient defers his confession, and when finally the priest is hurriedly summoned at the last moment, he arrives in all haste, but often too late: the man has breathed his last.

Lies of any sort, are prohibited; but a lie uttered against religion or regarding religion is one of extreme impiety, if not deliberately blasphemous. Among the transgressors of this commandment are flatterers and sycophants, "calling good evil and evil good" (Isaias, v. 20), who blush not to praise the vices of their dupes to further their own selfish ends. Such hypocrisy compares well with the deceits and wiles of Satan. Finally, simulation in action as well as speech is forbidden by this commandment. Actions as well as words are signs of our ideas and sentiments (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 110, a. 3), and hence Our Lord frequently rebuked the Pharisees for their deceitfulness, and called them hypocrites. How often did the Pharisees and Scribes simulate friendship and respect for Our Lord, when in reality they sought only to ensnare Him in His speech, as when they went up to Him and said: "We know, Master, that Thou art a true speaker . . . For Thou dost not regard the person of men." (Matt. xxii. 16; Mark, xii. 14). And these same men curried admiration and favor with the people by a sanctimonious demeanor and a strict outward observance of the traditions of their fathers.

373. What must they do who have lied about their neighbor and seriously injured his character?

They who have lied about their neighbor and seriously injured his character must repair the injury done as far as they are able, otherwise they will not be forgiven.

There are, as we have seen, several modes of injuring the character or reputation or good name of anyone: (a) if the act or words were justifiable, i. e., if the honor of God, the good of our neighbor or one's own necessity required it, no obligation would arise from what is a lawful act or speech; (b) if the defamation of a character was unlawful, then the wilful dishonoring of our neighbor was either truthful or not, i. e., it was either simple detraction or unfounded slander, or at least a rash judgment had been formed on a simple suspicion.

(a) In the case of a simple detraction, the guilty party is bound to restore the honor of which he has unjustly robbed his neighbor. He is not allowed to say that he has lied, since he has not, but he must do what is in his power to prevent belief in his detraction by saying he has spoken inconsiderately or unjustly, which is true. This course, however, can hardly ever be followed without creating a suspicion, if not a judgment, that the detractor himself is a slanderer; moreover, it is more likely that he will not be believed at all, and the remedy only injures still more his neighbor's good name: therefore in practice, it is best that a detractor simply show the injured one respect and speak well of him especially before those who have heard the detraction, or in whose estimation the defamed person has been injured.

(b) The slanderer is bound to restore the good name of his neighbor by retracting the lie, even, if to do so effectively, he be obliged to swear to the truth, and, even notwithstanding the fact that by his retraction, he may lose the esteem of his friends and acquaintances. If he has done what he could to undo the evil he unjustly wrought, he is free from further obligation, unless the calumny may have been the cause of the loss of a position or of other material damages, and in that case,

he is also bound to repair all the damages that were at least confusedly foreseen. Sincere penitents, who have been guilty of calumny, should candidly state their case to their confessor, and he generally will find a way to safeguard the honor of the slanderer as well as the good name of the slandered.

(c) As to those who have formed unjust suspicions, doubts or judgments about their neighbor, all that is required of them is to confess their sin with sorrow of heart and to lay aside their unjust suspicion, doubt or rash judgment. It is evident that if the judgment is based on absolutely convincing truths, there is no injustice done and no obligation of reparation can result therefrom.

374. What is the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment is: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

375. What is forbidden by the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment forbids unchaste thoughts, desires of another's wife or husband, and all other unlawful impure thoughts and desires.

The desire to commit any sin against the sixth commandment partakes of the malice of the act in view, so that he who desires to commit adultery, commits adultery in his heart, for "Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. v. 27, 28); likewise he who covets a single woman and lusts after her, hath committed in his heart the sin of fornication; and we must judge similarly of all other unchaste desires.

But why are unlawful impure thoughts forbidden? Simply because of our evil inclinations to all kinds of impurity, all unlawful impure thoughts are near occasions of sin. Immodest thoughts are forbidden for the same reason that immodest looks, songs and conversa-

tions, and the reading of immodest books or newspapers are forbidden; they are, in a word, forbidden because in all the temptations against the holy virtue of chastity, victory lies in flight, as we have remarked already. We are bound under pain of mortal sin to avoid the near occasions of the abominable sin of impurity; therefore, if some thoughts cannot be strictly classed as impure, but yet may lead to immodest thoughts, we must banish them. The love of the beautiful virtue of chastity should make us shun, as far as possible, the remotest occasion of all acts and desires contrary to it. For that reason, it is well to avoid thinking of persons, scenes or places, which usually engender bad thoughts.

376. Are impure thoughts and desires always sins?

Impure thoughts and desires are always sins, unless they displease us and we try to banish them.

1. Strictly impure desires, if we understand by them wilful desires of what is unlawful, are always sinful and, therefore, the catechism speaks of unlawful desires in the previous numbers. But it is not sinful to desire what may lawfully be done, since what is done unlawfully by one person, may be lawfully done by another: the chastity of single people is not the chastity of married people; and for that reason, it is not sinful for married people to desire what may be lawfully done, provided the unrestricted desire of what is lawful, does not lead to an unlawful and abominable species of impurity.

Impure thoughts or representations of unchaste scenes or actions in our mind are sinful only if they are wilful, and otherwise unlawful or unnecessary. Impure thoughts are largely the result of sins of impurity, which memory brings back to the mind; they may come also from the reading of bad or dangerous literature, or from unguarded looks, for "from the heart come forth evil thoughts." (Matt. xv. 19). They arise also from impure or loose conversations, or finally from natural evil inclinations, i. e., from the concupiscence of the flesh or

from the temptation of the evil one. Whatever may be their origin, impure thoughts become sinful only if they are wilfully entertained. If one tries to banish them, even if they come back a score of times, it is not a sin, and every rejection of the temptation is a victory that adds to one's merit before God.

Since even pious people are annoyed with impure thoughts, and are assailed by scruples on account of it, we give here a further explanation from Gaume's Catechism: There are four kinds of impure thoughts: viz., banished thoughts, dismissed thoughts, morose thoughts and consummated thoughts.

1. Banished thoughts are those that are rejected with horror as soon as they are noticed, like a dog that tries to bite and is driven off. Such thoughts are never sinful, no matter how often they come back, and they should never annoy any chaste man or woman. If we have an habitual horror of mortal sin, we may, if any doubt arises whether we have consented or not, rest assured that we are not guilty of any sin. Does not the soldier who repels a hundred times the attacks of the enemy, give his chief a hundred proofs of his courage and of his fidelity?

2. Dismissed thoughts are those we reject with a kind of indifference, as we should dismiss anyone, who makes his visit at an inopportune moment and whom we nevertheless accompany as far as the door. The heart, charmed by the voluptuousness, is, so to speak, benumbed, and stops to somewhat consider the thought, but not with full deliberation. These thoughts are only venial sins, even if they should be of something abominable. To confess them, penitents should simply say that they did not promptly banish the bad thoughts, but did not fully consent to them.

3. Morose thoughts, or wilful impure thoughts, are those with which the mind is wilfully occupied, or on which it wilfully dwells, after having become conscious of their presence and of their turpitude, but without the will or desire to commit the deed. Such an impure thought must simply be confessed as such, nor is it necessary to confess in what the impure thought consisted, as long as it was not accompanied by deliberate evil desires.

4. Consummated thoughts are those which are accompanied by an intention or desire to commit the impure action; in this case the penitent must confess the particular species of sin, which formed the object of his evil intention. This is evident from the explanation given above on evil desires, which partake of the guilt of the act; hence desires of fornication,

adultery, incest, and of all other species of impurity, must be distinguished in confession, according to their kind or nature.

377. What are we commanded by the ninth commandment?

We are commanded by the ninth commandment to keep ourselves pure in thought and desire.

This answer of the Catechism forms part of the answer treated in No. 365, and therefore the explanation given above applies also to this answer.

378. What is the tenth commandment?

The tenth commandment is: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

The reason that the desire of another's goods is the object of a separate commandment from that against stealing is the same as that given for the necessity of a second commandment regarding impure desires, viz., human concupiscence, which also explains the prevalence of the vice of impurity and of theft. The former has the concupiscence of the flesh for its incentive, and the latter the concupiscence of the eyes, or the innate desire for riches, as well as the pride of life, i. e., the desire of honors and glory. If the "fool says in his heart there is no God," if so many people abandon all religious practices, it is because man's strongest passion, the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eye or the unlawful inclination to take and keep what belongs to others, find an obstacle in the religion which an upright and just God has established, a religion that condemns both vices. Therefore we are warned in Holy Scripture: "Set not thy heart upon unjust possessions . . . And follow not in thy strength the desires of thy heart." (Eccli. v. 1, 2). "Love not the world," says St. John, "for all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life." (1 John, ii. 15, 16). The desire of honor and glory is less dangerous, and unless accompanied by envy or by the use of unjust means, it

is not always sinful, but, on the contrary, often productive of a holy emulation. Lustful desires and the desire of another's property, however, are the direct cause of nearly all the vices which precipitate many millions of Christians into the very jaws of hell.

379. What are we commanded by the tenth commandment?

By the tenth commandment we are commanded to be content with what we have and to rejoice in our neighbor's welfare.

Charity commands the love of God above all things and of our neighbor as of ourselves. We are not commanded to love our neighbor more than ourselves, but to love him with the same love we should have for ourselves. This is comprised in the saying: "Do to others as you wish others should do unto you."

Listen to St. Paul when he speaks of charity: Charity is patient (for it suffers all things, even insults and injuries); is kind (for it wishes to others all it desires for itself); charity envieth not (for it rejoiceth in the good fortune of others, as much as if the good had come to itself); dealeth not perversely, i. e., maliciously (for in desires as well as in actions, it seeks the welfare of others, and prevents injury to them, if it be in its power); is not puffed up (for it considers that when benefits come to it, it is unworthy of them); is not ambitious (for it is content with what it has and desires nothing more); seeketh not her own (for in all it does, it acts with disinterested motives, and it seeks rather the good of others than its own; moreover, its thoughts, desires and actions rather tend to the kingdom of God upon earth, confiding in God's promises that all other things useful will be added to it).

380. What is forbidden by the tenth commandment?

The tenth commandmeot forbids all desires to take or keep wrongfully what belongs to another.

We have remarked already that he who desires to take or keep wrongfully what belongs to another has already committed theft in his heart, and therefore the tenth commandment forbids coveting of another's goods

by any means which justice condemns, viz., theft, rapine, fraud and usury. The tenth commandment also forbids the desire of retaining what belongs to another such as the intention of not paying just debts, as well as the determination not to repair the damage done unjustly to another's property; because each of these intentions is equivalent to a resolution to commit an injustice and to persevere in it.

Why does God condemn the desire of injustice? First, because the desire is wicked in itself, and secondly, because like a wise Legislator He wishes to prevent overt acts of injustice: if there were no unjust desires, there would be no unjust actions. Human legislators can punish only the evil actions of man, and cannot prevent wicked thoughts and desires to steal, to murder, to commit adultery, etc. Hence they cannot get at the root of the evil. This explains why there cannot be any morality without religion: take away the fear of God, Who sees the mind and heart of man, and man becomes a savage beast, a prey to his criminal passions and uncontrollable concupiscences.

LESSON THE THIRTY-FIFTH

ON THE FIRST AND SECOND COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH

381. Which are the chief commandments of the Church?

The chief commandments of the Church are six:

1. To hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation.
2. To fast and abstain on the days appointed.
3. To confess at least once a year.
4. To receive the Holy Eucharist during Easter time.
5. To contribute to the support of our pastor.
6. Not to marry persons who are not Catholics, or who are related to us within the third degree of kindred, nor privately without witnesses, nor to solemnize marriage at forbidden times.

The commandments here given are not the only commandments of the Church, and, therefore, the catechism speaks only of the chief commandments, that bind all Christians. Among the laws of the Church there are some that were promulgated by Christ Himself, such as those relating to the constitution of the Church, her prerogatives and powers, all that is essential to the Sacraments and to the Sacrifice of the Mass, the virtues which we must practice, the good works to be performed and the vices to be shunned and the duties toward our neighbor with all the precepts of the Decalogue; but the Church was founded by Christ to continue His mission and to execute in detail His commands, as well as to carry out His plan and economy for the salvation of souls. To comply with her mission to teach all nations, to observe all things whatsoever the Saviour has commanded (Matt. xxviii. 20), additional laws have to be framed according to the necessities of the times, persons and places, and these laws form together what is called the Canon Law.

382. Is it a mortal sin not to hear Mass on a Sunday or holyday of obligation?

It is a mortal sin not to hear Mass on a Sunday or holyday of obligation, unless we are excused for a serious reason. They also commit a mortal sin, who, having others under their charge, hinder them from hearing Mass without a sufficient reason.

In number 350 we explained what is forbidden by the third commandment of God, and that applies to Sundays and all other holydays of obligation. It behooves us now to explain what is commanded on those days under pain of mortal sin; and among the chief commandments of the Church, the first commands us: To hear Mass on Sundays and on holydays of obligation. By a holyday of obligation is meant any feast day, other than Sunday, to be kept like Sunday; for there are many feast days during the year which are only days of devotion, days of a greater or less solemnity, on which the faithful may attend to their different occupations and are not bound to assist at Mass or at other services in the church.

By the first commandment of the Church all Christians, who have attained the use of reason, are commanded to hear Mass on Sundays and on other holydays of obligation and nothing more, and this obligation binds under pain of mortal sin. Why does the Church compel us under pain of a grievous sin to assist at Mass on days of obligation? To worship God is a duty imposed by natural law, as well as by the Mosaic Law. The Mass is the most solemn and excellent act of worship that can be rendered to the Supreme Majesty, and the only one worthy of an infinitely holy God. One Mass gives greater homage and glory to God than all the devotion of martyrs or saints, and one Mass is more meritorious than all the prayers of the faithful on earth from the day of man's creation; and it possesses a greater intrinsic value than all the other sacrifices offered up to God since the beginning of the world. There is only one sacrifice that equals it and it is the Sacrifice of the Saviour expiring on the Cross; for the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacrifice of the Cross are essentially the same, differing only in the manner in which the offering is made, as we have already learned.

As the Church commands us to hear Mass and not a part of a Mass, he who wilfully omits a portion of it, commits a sin, venial or mortal: a mortal sin, if he omits a third part of the Mass and a venial sin, if only a small part of the Mass is omitted, such as from the beginning to the gospel, or from the communion to the end of the Mass. To leave the church at the last gospel is not considered a sin, as what follows the "Ite, Missa Est" is not, strictly speaking an integral part of the Mass. But religious decorum would forbid it, in the absence of a reason.

One does not comply with the obligation of hearing Mass, if he hears two half Masses said by two different priests at the same time, eg., if one priest begins Mass, when another is at the consecration and if a person who assists at both Masses, should leave the church when the first priest is at the consecration and the second has finished his Mass, would the person who assists at those Masses, said at the ame time, fulfill his obligation? Undoubtedly not; but the case would be different if a Catholic without any fault of his own, arrives late, when the priest, for instance, is about to begin the consecration, and if later he assists at another Mass, he may without sin leave the church, when the celebrant of the second Mass has arrived at the consecration, provided always that the conse-

cration and communion from part of one same service attended; but it is more advisable that he should remain until the end, in order to gain the spiritual fruits of the last Mass.

To hear Mass, one must be physically or morally present. One is morally present, if he is conscious of what he is doing, i. e., if he knows that he is assisting at a religious worship. One who is unconscious or asleep cannot claim any moral presence. One must also be physically or bodily present, i. e., present with the congregation of worshippers in the church, or in a room adjoining, or even outside, but always near enough to see or hear what is going on, even if he cannot see the priest or the altar.

Attention is also required, at least such that one follows the principal parts of the Mass. One who passes the whole time in serious conversation, or is studying, or reading a newspaper, etc.—which necessarily absorbs nearly all his attention—cannot be attentive to the Mass. To whisper a few words, or to be slightly distracted does not prevent the hearing of Mass; but it is an irreverence towards God and towards the Holy Sacrifice, and therefore it is a venial sin.

The causes which excuse anyone from the obligation of hearing Mass, are mainly the following:

a) Physical inability or impossibility excuses from the obligation the sick, the lame, sailors or passengers on ships, prisoners and all those who live in communities or localities, where no Mass is said, provided they have a reasonable excuse to dwell there.

b) Moral inability. Those morally unable to comply with the obligation are those who live so far from the church, that it would be considered a serious hardship to be obliged to go to Mass, on account of the long distance, the heat, the bad weather or other serious reasons. Bad weather is an excusing cause chiefly for those in delicate health.

c) Charity. Those are excused from hearing Mass who have to take care of the sick, and likewise mothers with young children they cannot leave alone. Even

wives may be excused if their husbands become furiously angry when they go to church. Danger of serious loss to ourselves or others will excuse those who help to put out fires, or to save furniture, animals, crops, and adjacent buildings from being burned, or help in capturing horses or cattle which otherwise would do much damage to our own or our neighbor's crops.

d) Particular occupations. There are occupations which often make attendance at Mass impossible: among those excused on that score are soldiers, policemen, watchmen of forests and of other property easily destroyed, glassblowers, laborers in smelters, in large foundries, at brick-ovens, etc.

The catechism adds a proper warning to those who not only fail to comply with the obligation of hearing Mass themselves, but prevent others from doing so; and it names especially superiors, who hinder those under their charge from hearing Mass either directly or indirectly: directly, by forbidding it out of hatred of our holy religion, or indirectly, by imposing upon their inferiors such labor as prevents attendance at Mass. Masters, who have the welfare of their servants at heart, will so arrange the time of meals and the necessary labors to be performed on Sundays, that their servants can attend an early Mass before their work begins.

Even unscrupulous Catholics are often guilty of mortal sin, when they urge their friends and acquaintances, on days of obligation, to take part in amusements and outings which will make it impossible for them to assist at Mass and to attend to other Christian duties.

383. Why were holydays instituted by the Church?

Holydays were instituted by the Church to recall to our mind the great mysteries of our holy religion and the virtues and rewards of the saints.

We may divide the holydays into two classes: 1st, those that remind us directly of our Blessed Lord's Incarnation, His Nativity, His Circumcision, the Epiphany or the Adoration of the Magi, His glorious Resurrection, His Ascension, and the Descent of His Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. These are the principal holydays of the year, by which we commemorate some great event in the

life of our Saviour and by which we recall to our mind not merely a bare fact, but all that it means to us. These feasts celebrate what we call the mysteries of our holy religion. The Feast of the Annunciation means to us that the Son of God assumed our human nature in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and thus became incarnate to reconcile fallen man, estranged from God through sin, to our Father in Heaven. The Feast of Christmas, or Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, reminds us that He was born into the world as our Saviour, i. e., to redeem us from sin and hell. The Circumcision means to us that as circumcision made the Jews members of the chosen people of God, so we Christians become members of the true Church by Baptism, of which circumcision was the figure. The Epiphany unfolds to us the truth of our calling to the true faith, contrary to the expectation of the Jews who excluded all people but themselves from a participation in the blessings of the Messiah's coming upon earth. We have seen what the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost mean to us. Hence we understand that all the foregoing holydays instituted by the Church, recall to our mind the great mysteries of the Catholic Religion. 2nd. The second class of holydays regards events in the lives of those who were closely connected with the work of the Saviour upon earth for the regeneration of mankind. To this class belong the holydays in honor of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, of St. John the Baptist, the Precursor of our Lord, of St. Joseph, the Saviour's guardian, of the Apostles and of the Evangelists who were chosen to preach Christ's doctrine. All these feasts, whether holydays of obligation or not, remind us likewise of many dispensations of God's love towards us, but they remind us also of the saints' virtues, their sufferings, their zeal in the cause of our holy Religion and the share they took in our salvation.

To these may be added the feast of St. Gabriel, the Angel of the Annunciation, of St. Michael, the leader of

the heavenly hierarchy, of the other angelic spirits who vanquished the infernal dragon and who are constituted our defenders against the infernal legions, and who, together with our Guardian Angels, are appointed by God our special protectors against the wiles of Satan.

3rd. The third class of feasts or holydays regards all other saints, who by their wisdom, their great virtues and their heroic lives, have at all times illustrated the Church of God. Their glorious deeds are upheld as examples for imitation, to stimulate our zeal for the honor and glory of God and for the salvation of the souls of others as well as of our own.

384. How should we keep the holydays of obligation?

We should keep the holydays of obligation as we should keep the Sunday.

In the preceding number we have seen that there are many holydays in the Church, but not all are days of obligation to be kept like all Sundays during the year. On holydays of obligation, also called feastdays of obligation, all Catholics, unless lawfully excused, must hear Mass and abstain from servile work. In the United States the holydays of obligation which may fall on days other than Sunday, are: Our Lord's Nativity or Christmas, His Circumcision and Ascension, the Assumption and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and the Feast of All Saints.

There are besides many other holydays or feast-days which are celebrated in most Catholic countries with the same solemnity as ordinary Sundays or even as great feasts. These holydays were formerly of obligation, but their obligation has been abrogated, and they are, therefore, now only feast-days of devotion. Among these abrogated feasts are some whose solemnity is transferred to the following Sunday: viz., Corpus Christi and the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul.

385. What do you mean by fast-days?

By fast-days I mean days on which we are allowed but one full meal.

There are two kinds of fasts: one called the natural fast, which consists in abstaining from all food and drink from midnight, and this fast from the previous midnight is required for the reception of the Holy Eucharist; and the second is the ecclesiastical fast, which the Church imposes on all those who are over twenty-one years of age and less than sixty, and who are not excused from it on account of sickness, hard labor or other serious cause. It obliges them to abstain from certain food, permits only one full meal a day, though allowing a collation, and suggests the time for the full meal, which is about noon. The time for the collation is set for evening, unless one chooses to invert the order of time regarding the noon and evening meal. The regulations for Lent and other fast-days, read each year in all the parochial churches, must guide the faithful of each diocese in the observance of the fast.

The law of abstinence alone must be kept on all Fridays.

The law of abstinence and fasting must be kept on Ash Wednesday, on Fridays and Saturdays during Lent and on Ember days; on the vigils of Pentecost, of the Assumption of the Bl. Virgin, of All Saints and of Christmas. The fast alone must be kept on other days of Lent. On Sundays and feast-days of obligation, there is neither abstinence nor fast, except on feast-days during Lent. Vigils as fast and abstinence days admit no anticipation and Lent ceases after noon on Holy Saturday. (C. J. C.—Can. 1252).

The law of abstinence binds all those who have completed their seventh year, and the law of fasting binds those who have completed their twenty-first year until they have entered upon their sixtieth year. (Can. 1254).

1. By virtue of a special Indult of the Holy See, which, although given for a certain number of years, will most likely

be renewed, laborers and their families are dispensed from the obligation of abstinence on all days of the year, except Fridays, Ash-Wednesday, the Wednesday and Saturday of Holy Week, and Christmas Eve.

2. By Apostolic Indult, lard and drippings of the fat of any animal, are allowed in the preparation of food on all animals, are allowed in the preparation of food on all fast-days; but in this dispensation is not included the use of meat-juice or soups made from flesh-meat on days when meat is not allowed.

3. Whenever a dispensation from flesh-meat is given, it includes the dispensation from eggs, cheese, butter and milk, and all lacteous food, or food prepared with milk.

4. By flesh-meat is understood the meat of all animals living on land, and by fish the food of animals living in water. The meat of birds or fowls is considered as flesh-meat. As to amphibia or animals who live on land and in water, they must be adjudged to the class to which they approach the nearer: the following are considered as food allowed on days of abstinence: frogs, turtles, snails, oysters and all kinds of shell fish. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 147, a. 5).

5. Those who are exempt from the fast are still bound to abstain from meat on all days of abstinence; but for them there is no further restriction as to the kind of food on days on which meat is allowed: they may eat meat at every meal, unless the bishop of the diocese, who dispenses by Papal authority limits the use of meat to one meal, which is not to be supposed, if not clearly set forth.

The eating of fish and meat at the same meal on days of fasting but not of abstinence, though once prohibited, is now permitted by the Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope Benedict XV in 1917.

Collation. The collation allowed besides the full meal on fast-days should not exceed eight ounces of solid food, and may consist of any food except meat, so that those who are bound to fast may eat fish in small quantities, say two or three ounces, eggs, cheese, butter, milk and all food prepared with cheese, butter or milk: also bread, vegetables and sweets are allowed, provided all the different foods do not exceed eight ounces.

Custom allows a cup of coffee, tea or chocolate with a morsel of bread in the morning.

Liquids, understood in the strictest sense, do not break the fast, and by liquids we understand all drinks usually taken to slake one's thirst. Therefore, lemonade with a small quantity of sugar or syrup, sherberts, even when frozen, tea, coffee, beer, wine, etc., may be drunk at will; but as St. Thomas well

remarks, if the drinking of alcoholic liquids is excessive, the faster may lose part or all of the fruit of his fast. (Cf. St. Thos. II. 2, q. 147, a. 6, to 2, to 3).

Remarks. If for grave reasons a member of a family is dispensed from the law of abstinence, other members are not dispensed thereby; still, when on days of abstinence it would be onerous to cook two different kinds of food, it is a sufficient reason for those who are bound by the law of abstinence, to seek a dispensation from them who are authorized thereto. This applies also to families of which the father is not a Catholic and is not willing to abstain, or will not consent to two different fares for the table.

Who can dispense from the fast and abstinence?

The Pope can dispense throughout the whole Church, and no one else can dispense from the general laws of the Church, unless the power has been delegated to him by the Pope.

By Canon Law, not only Ordinaries of localities, but also parish priests are authorized to dispense, in individual cases and for a just cause, their subjects as individual faithful or single families, even outside their territory and within their territory even foreigners, from the common law regarding the observe of fasts as well as the observance of fasting and abstinence, or also from both laws together. (Can. 1245).

The advice given by conscientious physicians, who are generally best capable of judging whether fasting or abstinence may be hurtful to their patients or not, may be safely followed. Confessors can only declare the reasons for exemption from the fast and abstinence to be sufficient, and the faithful may safely follow their decision.

Be it further remarked that he who is fully convinced that he cannot fast without serious injury to his health, does not need any dispensation; nevertheless, unless he is clearly exempt from the fast, it is advisable that he consult his confessor. (Cf. St. Thos. II. 2, q. 147, a. 4).

Which are the causes that exempt one from the fast?

1. Physical or moral impossibility. To the physically unable to fast may be applied the adage: "Necessity knows no law." Those morally unable to fast, are those who cannot fast without serious detriment to their health, e. g., those of a weak constitution, who are subject to severe and prolonged headaches when they fast or pass sleepless nights on account of it; pregnant and nursing women, the sick and the convalescent, etc.

2. Age. Age excuses those who have not completed their twenty-first year or have entered upon their sixtieth year.

3. Poverty excuses beggars who go from door to door begging, and who eat whatever food is given them.

4. Labor. Hard labor excuses from the fast artisans,

mechanics, diggers, farmers, farriers, carpenters, blacksmiths, masons, glassblowers and generally all those whose physical exertion make fasting impossible or hurtful.

5. Among those excused from fasting are also wives, sons or daughters who would be obliged to bear the ill-will of a husband or father, who objects to their fasting; and likewise servants are excused, if their masters threaten to discharge them, if they fast.

Finally, those are dispensed from fasting, who, on account of physical or mental labor or their peculiar constitution, or on account of their exertions for the spiritual or temporal welfare of their neighbor, would be forced by fasting to abandon their duties, or could not perform them properly. To those especially we recommend to lay their case before their pastors or confessors, who may impose upon them some other work of supererogation, such as alms, prayers, assistance at Mass on the days they do not fast, or Holy Communion, Stations of the Cross, etc.

386. What do you mean by days of abstinence?

By days of abstinence I mean days on which we are forbidden to eat flesh-meat, but are allowed the usual number of meals.

The days of abstinence in the United States, considered strictly and exclusive of fast-days, are all the Fridays of the year, except when a feast-day of obligation falls on that day; for in that case all the Christians of the whole world are exempt from the law of abstinence as well as of fasting.

All those of seven years of age are forbidden the use of flesh-meat on days of abstinence, nor are they allowed to use meat in preparing any food; but by dispensation the use of lard or grease from melted fat of any animal is allowed in place of butter. This law binds all Christians under pain of mortal sin, except children under seven years of age; so that if anyone eat two ounces of meat several times on a day of abstinence, he would commit each time a mortal sin.

Who are dispensed from the law of abstinence?

1. All those who on account of serious infirmity or natural weakness cannot digest their food prepared without meat.

2. All travellers who cannot find sufficiency of other substantial food than meats. If they can without much difficulty

find a hotel or restaurant where fish or eggs can be obtained, they should abstain.

3. Catholics should not, as a rule, accept on Fridays or other days of abstinence, invitations to dine out with friends who are not practical Catholics; but if from some unexpected cause they are at a table, on which no other substantial food than meat is served, they may be dispensed from the abstinence, provided they thereby do not scandalize their neighbor, as religious or priests surely would, and provided they be not on familiar terms with their hosts and could ask that licit food be prepared for them.

4. In many isolated places of the United States, it is practically impossible to procure substantial food other than meat, and workmen and their families, like miners, wood-cutters, loggers and those working in saw-mills, etc., may freely eat whatever can be bought in such a locality.

387. Why does the Church command us to fast and abstain?

The Church commands us to fast and abstain, in order that we may mortify our passions and satisfy for our sins.

The most serious obstacles to our salvation are the passions, which comprise the sensual appetites or the concupiscence of the flesh and the intellectual appetites, but the latter in the inferior part of the soul, are properly called passions. Before the fall of Adam his sensual appetites remained in all things subject to reason, until then free from moral darkness and evil inclination; the intellectual appetites also obeyed reason, and reason obeyed God. But after the fall, this beautiful harmony was destroyed: reason rebelled against God, and the sensual as well as the intellectual appetites revolted against reason; and that revolt continues in Adam's descendants, who have inherited his depraved nature. Hence, our unruly sensual appetites, called also the concupiscence of the flesh, and our intellectual appetites are often in open revolt against reason.

Concupiscence of the flesh, or sensual appetites. The sensual appetites are five, born of the five senses; the hearing, the sight, the smell, the taste and the touch. Of all the senses, that of smell is the least dangerous; and the sense of touch, not

being confined to one part of the body, like the other four senses, and being besides of an indomitable and fiery nature, is of all the senses the most formidable and the most dangerous enemy of our spiritual welfare. The pleasure that comes to us from the senses may be licit or illicit; and when illicit, if we consent to it, may be a venial or a mortal sin. But all those pleasures must be repressed and the senses mortified, if sound reason detect any disorder in any of them. By mortifying one of the sensual appetites, we diminish indirectly the resistance of the others, for the will, which is weakened by giving way to sinful inclinations, is strengthened by repressing them generously. Therefore, we are warned not to satisfy without restriction the sensual appetites even in matters of indifference. Nevertheless, sensual pleasures, though indifferent in themselves and therefore not illicit, may become good and praiseworthy, if enjoyed for a good end. The virtuous man, listening to harmonious music, raises his affections towards heaven and gives praise to God; he contemplates the beauties of nature for the sake of recreation and adores its Creator; he thankfully smells the fragrant flowers; he puts on his soft garment agreeable to the touch, but solely as a preservation for his delicate body; he savors a course of well-prepared food to regain strength lost by over-exertion; in all, he gratefully remembers the benign Creator, Who has destined all these things for his use. Those same indifferent things may also awaken in us unlawful desires and sensations, or increase in us an illicit concupiscence, e. g., in eating and drinking more than is required for our health; and thus the five senses may all give rise to unlawful sensual appetites. Then it becomes a duty to mortify the sense which is an occasion of or incentive to sin.

We understand from this how useful, if not absolutely necessary, it is to mortify our senses by controlling their inordinate appetite, and by fasting and abstinence, in order to chastise the body and bring it under subjection. (1 Cor. ix. 17).

Passions or intellectual appetites. St. Thomas (I. 2, q. 23, a. 4) enumerates eleven passions—six: love, hatred, desire, aversion, joy and sadness, belong to the concupiscible appetite, and the other five: hope, despair, fear, boldness and anger, belong to the irascible appetite. All these passions are born of one, love; for hatred is nothing else than a detestation of what is opposed to the possession of what one loves. From love and hatred all the other passions spring; e. g., he who has an inordinate love for riches, hates poverty or what may cause it, and the more he loves wealth, the more he desires it and hopes for it, if it be obtainable; he is bold in procuring it, and if he obtains the coveted boon, he is rejoiced, but fears to

lose it; he has an aversion for danger and he is angered against those who would deprive him of his object; if he lose it, he is saddened and if the loss be irretrievable, he despairs. The passions may not necessarily always follow that order, but this shows how all passions spring from one, the passion of love.

Passions are bad, only if they be inordinate or unmortified; for, then, instead of being conformable to sound reason and regulated by faith, they refuse to submit to both, and follow blindly the inclinations of a corrupt nature, and thus they tyrannize over the feeble will of man.

All vices have their source in the passions and the concupiscence of the flesh: pride springs from inordinate love or esteem of our own excellence; avarice from too great a love of riches, which are dearer to the miser than his God; lust is but an inordinate love of the body, which seeks carnal pleasure above God's holy will and the precepts of sound reason; anger comes from an excessive love of one's honor; gluttony results from the love of the body, which desires immoderately the satisfaction of its taste; envy is but disguised self-love, which considers the welfare of our neighbor a detriment to our own; finally sloth is a love of self badly understood, as it creates a disgust for holy things, because of the sacrifices a holy life imposes.

As love of self creates in us so many vices, the principal remedy for subduing the passion is to deny ourselves, to take up our cross and follow in the foosteps of the Divine Master. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." (Matt. xvi. 34). A commendable practice for all is to mortify the body—the love of which is a direct or indirect cause of all vices—by chastising it; and this the sinner should do by vigils, fasts and by abstinence not only from flesh-meat, but from all that is most pleasing to the taste, provided it be not indispensable to the preservation of his health; he should refrain from amusements, especially those of a nature to awaken the passions, sleep on a hard bed or floor, or resort to other means to cause pain to the body. Fervent and humble prayer is also necessary to overcome inveterate passions, for we know that of ourselves we can do no good. "Without Me you can do nothing" (John xv. 5), says our Lord; and His faithful Apostle teaches likewise: "Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency comes from God." (2 Cor. iii. 5).

To overcome a predominant passion, known to us by our besetting sin or by the specific sin we commit most frequently, our efforts and our prayers should especially be directed towards overcoming it, and we should give it no respite until com-

plete victory has been secured. The special remedies for the principal dominant passions are given in No. 59, which treats of the seven capital sins.

In order to obtain the desired victory over any dominant passion, the following rules should be observed: (a) to practice diligently the virtues opposed to the passion we wish to combat; (b) to counteract the passion as soon as we are conscious of its presence; for to allow it to grow, would be like waiting to pull up a bad weed, until it is fully grown, when more effort will be required to uproot it; (c) to give a holy direction to the passion, and this rule must be employed conjointly with the preceding two, which should never be neglected. This last rule demands an explanation, as its observance is not easy for the newly enlisted soldier in the army of Calvary's Victim of sin. A passion is an energy, which may be made an ally in our warfare for salvation. Our soul cannot exist during our natural life on earth without experiencing sentiments of love, desire, hope, fear, joy or sadness; and, as a consequence, a conquered passion will revive again. We should then turn the predominant passion towards a more laudable object, one worthy of a rational being created for union with God. Are your thoughts, desires and affections intent on the fleeting goods of this world? Then direct them towards the celestial treasures and enjoyments that know no end. Are you irascible or hateful? Substitute for the object of your unlawful contempt or hatred, your worst enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil. In like manner change the love of carnal pleasure into the love of God and of the spiritual enjoyments and consolations which a holy life is sure to bring you, or into the love of the Saviour, of His Spouse the Church or of the celestial joys, which the sight of God and the company of the blessed spirits and of the saints will impart. Similar substitutes for the unlawful object of any passion are to be recommended; for, as love is the source and guide of all passions, if it be sanctified, it will sanctify the passions themselves whose inclinations it controls.

By fasting and abstinence we also satisfy for our sins. Fasts and abstinences are good and meritorious works, as they enable man to practice virtue by bridling the passions which turn us from our duties towards God, our neighbor and ourselves. This merit is increased by a humble obedience to the Church, which commands both mortifications. The subject of satisfaction for sin has been treated in Lesson the Nineteenth, which relates to the chief means by which we satisfy God for

the temporal punishments due to sin. (Cf. Nos. 218 to 221).

388. Why does the Church command us to abstain from flesh-meat on Fridays?

The Church commands us to abstain from flesh-meat on Fridays, in honor of the day on which our Saviour died.

Our Saviour was crucified about noon on a Friday; He hung for three long hours on the cróss and expired thereon. The sacrifice of the God-Man for our redemption was accomplished; nevertheless the crime that brought about His death was deicide. Those who condemned the Innocent One, or who instigated the horrible deed or co-operated in it, were murderers of their God. Nature mourned, for the earth trembled, the sun refused to give his light, and complete darkness spread over the earth. Can we Christians remain insensible, when we recollect that our sins, as well as the envy and hatred of the Jews, caused the death of the Innocent One? Should we culprits not mourn on such a memorial day, when we gaze on the mangled body, the torn flesh of the Son of God, hanging in shreds, so that all His bones could be counted?

The Church asks but a little sacrifice on the day on which the God-Man sacrificed His life for us; it asks the sacrifice of our favorite dish, meat, and of all food prepared with meat. Only absolute necessity that knows no law, should be invoked as a valid excuse for not observing the day on which the Saviour died as a day for mortifying the concupiscene of our guilty flesh. Could we dare to taste flesh-meat on that day on which the most brutal and most heinous murder was perpetrated?

Remark. Let us note here again that a Friday on which a feast of obligation falls, is no longer a day of abstinence.

LESSON THE THIRTY-SIXTH

ON THE THIRD TO THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT OF THE CHURCH

389.—What is meant by the command of confessing at least once a year?

By the command of confessing at least once a year is meant that we are obliged, under pain of mortal sin, to go to confession within the year.

390. Should children go to confession?

Children should go to confession, when they are old enough to commit sin, which is commonly about the age of seven years.

The precept to confess at least once a year to the bishop or to a priest approved by the bishop, binds all baptized Christians who have arrived at the use of discretion, i. e., whose minds are sufficiently developed to distinguish between good and evil. The age of discretion, or the use of reason, occurs in most children about the seventh year; but the precocious child, able to distinguish virtue and vice, good and evil, in thoughts or actions, and capable of deceit (Roman Cat.), is also bound under pain of mortal sin to obey the law, if it has sinned grievously. We add: if it has sinned grievously, for no child guilty of venial sins only, is obliged to go to confession before its seventh year.

Let us observe: (a) that as no one is bound to confess venial sins, the annual confession does not become obligatory on a child that has arrived at the use of reason and has no mortal sin to confess; but parents should not follow this in practice: first, because they may thereby scandalize their neighbor, and, secondly, because they cannot judge of their children's guilt; and, thirdly, because children should be accustomed early to go to confession, in order that they may conceive thereby a greater dread of sin, learn the near occasions of sin and the dangers of bad company, and acquire the habit of confession before the passions and the concuspicence of the flesh gain strength or ascendency in their hearts, and deter them later from the salutary practice of frequent confession.

(b) Hence, if any one, whether an adult or a child, who has been free from mortal sin during the greater part of the year, falls into mortal sin towards its end, he should confess before the year ends, although he may have been to confession within that year, but had only venial sins to confess.

As this obligation is generally but little understood by the people, many may neglect it without sin, but it should be followed in practice.

(c) Those who have made a sacrilegious confession, have not fulfilled the obligation of confessing at least once a year, and they are bound to make a good confession within the year.

(d) Children who have attained their seventh year, comply with their obligation, if they confess within the following year, provided no full year elapses thereafter between each confession. They also fulfill their obligation if they confess during any civil year, i. e., from January the first to December the thirty-first. But those who have made their first communion, fulfill the strict law of the Church only by a confession and a communion during the Easter time, except as set forth above in (c); for with respect to the annual confession, according to general practice, the year for confession as well as for communion is computed from one Easter to another.

(e) He who for some serious impediment has omitted his annual confession, is bound to comply with his duty as soon as practicable; and he who foresees that, owing to having to set out on a long voyage, he will not be able to make his annual confession towards the end of the year, should anticipate the time, and thus fulfill the spirit of the law. He is undoubtedly bound to do so under pain of mortal sin, if the Easter time has already begun.

391. Should we confess only once a year?

We should confess frequently, if we wish to lead a good life.

The Sacrament of Penance is a medicine for the past, and a preventive for the future; i. e., it cures the illness of the soul by washing away sin, and it is a preventive against future spiritual ailments. Timorous and devout people, fully convinced of the dangers to their salvation which surround them on all sides, frequently resort to confession. Among religious and God-fearing people, the practice is to go to confession weekly, and it should be observed not only by priests and

those living in religious communities, but even by people of the world who have their advancement in spiritual perfection at heart. "Be you perfect as also your Heavenly Father is perfect." "This is the will of God your sanctification." These two texts from Holy Scripture, the first of which records the words of our Saviour and the second uttered by St. Paul as an incentive to our striving towards perfection, teach us nothing less than perfect charity or the perfect love of God. This perfect charity is obtained only by purity of heart, which requires a constant vigilance over the inclinations and impulses of our sinful nature, as well as over all its actions, so that we may avoid as much as possible even the smallest sin. Still, whatever our precautions may be, although we can avoid all mortal sins, we cannot avoid all venial sins. (St. Thos. P. III, q. 89, a. 1 to 1). These stains of venial sins are impediments to our spiritual advancement, and as venial sins are committed daily, a weekly confession is certainly to be recommended. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." (1 John i. 8, 9).

Another effect of frequent confession is that it makes the soul more prudent and attentive, and more determined to avoid habitual faults; "for," says the Apostle, "the sorrow that is according to God worketh penance, steadfast unto salvation" (2 Cor. vii. 10), i. e., supernatural grief for having offended God, coupled with the sacramental absolution, produces a constant amendment in our manner of living: first, because the good resolutions we make remove the affection for sin and make the soul more prudent and circumspect; and secondly, on account of the special graces we receive in the Sacrament. (Cf. Lesson on Penance).

The ordinary excuse given by many for not adopting the practice of confessing weekly, is that they do not know what to confess. If they are really anxious to make progress towards perfection, let them have recourse to the daily exam-

ination of their conscience, which is an interior confession before the tribunal of our own conscience, and which, in default of a priest, takes in some manner the place of auricular confession: in both cases, acknowledgment of sin is made, in the one to the priest and in the other directly to God; and if, in the latter case, the confession is accompaniel by a perfect contrition, the sins are remitted.

All the saints who in their writings touch upon the subject, advise one or two examinations of conscience each day; and St. Ignatius not only followed the practice of two examinations, as now observed among all religious, but examined himself hourly on his thoughts, words and actions of the preceding hour, and subjected himself to severe penances for the least imperfection he detected in himself. St. Francis Borgia followed his example, and St. Dominic counselled the same practice. Even pagan philosophers considered this daily scrutiny of great advantage. Pythagoras prescribed it for his disciples, and Cicero must have imitated him, for he said of himself: "According to the customs of the Pythagorians, I recall to memory every evening all that I have said, heard and done during the day." (De Senect.). Seneca did likewise: "Every day," he writes, "I judge my cause. When the sun is down, I scrutinize my conscience regarding the whole day; I weigh all my actions and all my words. I hide nothing from myself and I let nothing pass" (De Ira). The saints undoubtedly based the custom they adopted on the utility of the practice, and on the words of the Apostle: "If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged," i. e., if we accuse ourselves before the tribunal of our own conscience, and blot out our sins by a sincere contrition, we need not fear the judgment of God.

The following method should be adopted in the daily examination of conscience: (a) place yourself in the presence of God, remembering the severity of His judgment immediately after death and on the last day; (b) ask of God light and grace to know your sins and to detest them; (c) scrutinize severely your thoughts, words and actions of the day, trying to recall the imperfections of each one and the good you should have done but have omitted to do, and as far as possible investigate the causes of all your shortcomings; (d) excite in your heart a sincere contrition for all your sins, imperfections and negligences: the crucifix before your eyes, the remembrance of God's goodness and mercy, and the thought of hell and Purgatory will aid greatly in conceiving a sincere grief for your faults; (e) make a firm purpose of amendment and try to ascertain the occasions and circumstances which have caused your faults, and which may occur again in the future.

392. What sin does he commit who neglects to receive Communion during the Easter time?

He who neglects to receive Communion during the Easter time commits a mortal sin.

The precept of the Church to receive the Holy Eucharist during the Easter time comprises two obligations, each binding under pain of mortal sin: viz., (a) a worthy Holy Communion, (b) to be received during Easter time. This twofold obligation is deduced from the decree of the Fourth Council of Lateran, proclaimed again by the Council of Trent in the following Canon (Sess. 13, Can. 9): "If anyone deny that each and all of Christ's faithful of either sex are bound, when they have attained the years of discretion, to communicate every year, at least at Easter, in accordance with the precepts of Holy Mother the Church, let him be anathema."

To the two obligations regarding the Paschal Communion, the Church adds also the following strong recommendation: "The faithful are to be advised to fulfill their Easter duty in their own parish church, and those who have received in another church should take care so to inform their pastor." (New Code of Canon Law, Can. 859).

2. All the faithful of either sex are bound by the law of Paschal Communion, as soon as they have attained the years of discretion, as the Councils of Lateran IV and Trent clearly teach. Unhappily this teaching of the Church has, in some parts of Europe, been construed as allowing children to be kept from receiving Holy Communion until their eleventh or twelfth year, on the plea that they would thus be better prepared to receive the august Sacrament. Pope Pius X, in his decree of 1905 on daily Communion, returns to the strict sense of the Councils of Lateran and Trent, and makes us understand that children who have arrived at the use of reason are bound to receive Holy Communion during the following Easter time. Parents should then endeavor to have their children sufficiently instructed, which will offer no difficulty, if children attend Catholic schools; but if they cannot be sent to such schools, the duty of preparing the children for their First Communion falls on the parents. The Holy Father makes no distinction between the age of discretion required for confession and that for Communion. As the use of discretion occurs

usually about the seventh year, the Paschal Communion should be received during the Easter time which follows their first confession, unless in the judgment of their pastor or confessor, the children cannot distinguish between ordinary food and the heavenly bread given them in Holy Communion.

Let us remark here that in case of dangerous sickness of a child that has attained the use of reason, parents should notify their pastor or his assistant, who will decide whether the sick child should receive the Holy Eucharist or not. In case of danger of death, Communion should not be deferred until Easter time, for then the precept of our Lord contained in the following warning becomes urgent: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood you shall not have life in you." (John vi. 53).

393. What is the Easter time?

The Easter time, in this country, is the time between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.

The Easter time, according to the general laws of the Church, begins with Palm Sunday and ends on Low Sunday, or the first Sunday after Easter; but bishops are authorized, each one in his respective diocese, to extend the time, and thus all the bishops of the United States have, by common accord, lengthened the time from two weeks to fourteen weeks, i. e., six weeks before Easter and eight weeks after Easter, so that Easter time in this country begins on the first Sunday of Lent and ends with Trinity Sunday.

If during the first part of Easter time anyone foresees that he will later have no opportunity to make his Easter duty, he is bound to do so before the impediment arises, according to common opinion; but he would not be strictly obliged to anticipate his Communion before the Easter time begins, because then the law is not yet in force. Notwithstanding, sincere Catholics should always obey the spirit of the law, which commands them to receive their Saviour every year, at least at Easter time. If they cannot go to Communion at Easter, they should go before, if possible. We must remark besides that he who cannot fulfill his Easter duty during the Easter time, must comply with it as soon as he can, and that those unable to go to church, must under pain of mortal sin receive Holy Communion in their homes. In most Catholic countries the priests offer their services to bring Holy Communion to the blind, lame, cripled and bed-ridden, four times in the year during or

near the ember-weeks, and all good Catholics avail themselves of that opportunity to receive their God and their Lord. The custom should be introduced in the United States, wherever it does not exist.

394. Are we obliged to contribute to the support of our pastors?

We are obliged to contribute to the support of our pastors, and to bear our share in the expenses of the Church and schools.

Public worship, as we have seen, is a natural consequence of our social nature and of our dependence on God. From the beginning of the world, but principally since the proclamation of the Mosaic Law, only certain definite persons, chosen by law, custom, right of succession, or by their own choice, were invested with the sacerdotal power to offer up sacrifices; and the expense of maintaining the religious worship was to be borne by the faithful of a particular religious community. For a time the heads of families were vested with sacerdotal as well as paternal authority. Abel and Cain offered up sacrifices, the former of the firstlings of the flock and the latter of the fruits of the earth. In the days of Abraham we see that Melchisedech was king and priest of the most High; and Abraham, after the war he waged so successfully to deliver his nephew Lot from captivity, bestowed upon Melchisedech the tenth part of all the spoils taken in battle. (Gen. xiv. 20). This is the first time that mention is made in Holy Scripture of tithes. Abraham's grandson Jacob, vowed a payment of tithes; from which fact we should judge that the practice of defraying the expenses of the public worship by contributions of the people at large was already in common use.

St. Thomas teaches us that the payment of tithes was not obligatory until the ministers of worship were appointed by God in the Mosaic dispensation. (St. Thos. II. 2, q. 87, a. 1). He teaches furthermore (l. c. a. 2) that by ecclesiastical law, tithes extended not only to the fruits of the earth, and to all classes of useful or domestic animals, such as cattle, sheep, horses, etc., but also to all kinds of revenue.

Under the Mosaic Law the tribe of Levi, chosen by God Himself, to furnish priests and levites for His worship, received no share in the division of the promised land. The other tribes were to provide from their allotments all that was required for the maintenance of divine worship, and for the support of priests and levites. Moses, by order of God, proclaimed as a law: "Thou shalt not delay to pay thy tithes and thy first fruits" (Exod. xxii. 29), and we gather from different other references made to the subject, that the levites received the tithes or tenth part of all animals, crops and fruits raised by the Israelites, as well as the firstlings of their flocks, and that they in turn set apart what was to be sacrificed, and gave to the priests one-tenth of all they received as tithes. This law, it is true, was a pure judicial law, and might always be observed, as the Angelic Doctor teaches; but it ceased to be binding with the advent of Christianity, unless the Church should re-enact the law in its entirety or in part. This, indeed, because of the rapid spread of the Christian Religion, the Church was compelled to do, in order to keep up the public religious worship, as well as to make provision for the support of the priests and for the maintenance of schools and charitable institutions. Thus the payment of tithes in a modified form became again obligatory, and St. Augustine (d. 430 A. D.) speaks of tithes in several of his works and sermons, and teaches that they should be paid as a debt; e. g., when he says, that "Tithes are demanded as a debt (justly due), and they who refuse to give them forcibly enter upon the property of others"; i. e., they steal their neighbor's goods, or rather steal what belongs to God. The payment of tithes was observed in nearly all Catholic countries from the first century after the establishment of the Christian Religion until the French Revolution. The Council of Trent, which finished its labors Dec. 4, 1563, decreed that tithes are to be paid in full, "and they who either withhold them or hinder (their payment) shall be excommunicated; nor shall they be absolved from this crime, until after full restitution has been made." (Sess. 25, Ch. 12). But with the coming of the spirit of commercialism, the bulk of the wealth passed from land and cattle owners and from the tillers of the soil, to those engaged in mercantile and industrial enterprises, and tithes afforded no longer a means of equalizing the burden of the maintenance of religious worship. Moreover, in nearly all the civilized nations of the world, the state has assumed in a great measure the charge of charitable institutions, which were formerly kept up by the Church, by building and maintaining hospitals, old people's homes, orphanages, etc., and by making appropriations for needy families, and all this from funds derived from taxation.

The domestic polity of civil governments in our day tends more and more to curtail, if not to enchain, the influence of

the Church; and, indeed, in many countries the Catholic Church is simply tolerated. Civil governments have changed their conduct towards the Church, and these changes, in matters of public worship and charitable institutions, together with the shifting of wealth from the land owners to the industrial and mercantile classes, necessarily brought about a change in the law of tithes; for such a levy unavoidably became onerous to the proprietors and tillers of the soil. To-day, accordingly, there remains nothing of the law of tithes but the principle which obliges Christians to provide the means for the government of the Church, the support of her priests and the maintenance of her public worship and her schools. Catholic schools belong essentially to the life of the Church, yea, they are essential to its very existence. In most countries, and especially in the United States, the civil government provides amply for the secular education of its youth; but secular education does not satisfy sincere Christians and Catholics; it contributes, and not a little, to indifferentism and agnosticism; and that tendency cannot be overcome by Catholic home influence alone, even if parents had the time and the will to instruct their children in all that regards their spiritual welfare. To a Catholic, his religion is paramount, for "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" Religion should form a part of the school curriculum: the child must be taught not only the Christian faith, but the practice of the duties of a Christian towards his God, towards his neighbor and towards himself. Each Catholic parish should have its school, and the Catholic community is in justice bound to maintain it. Moreover, Catholics should by their generosity strive to make their parish school equal to the best schools in the land imparting secular instruction. Religious and moral training is securely given only under Catholic patronage.

Although Catholics are no longer bound to set apart for the support of religion, one tenth of their income—for the Church leaves it to their generous religious spirit—, each one should give in proportion to his income. All should help to defray the expenses of all that regards the maintenance of our holy religion. Home and foreign missions should also appeal to the Catholic spirit of each individual. This work cannot be imposed as a duty of justice, like the obligation to contribute towards the maintenance of the public worship and of the parochial school; but it is of all charities the most excellent and the most meritorious, for there can be nothing more acceptable to God, than to co-operate in the salvation of souls for which the Saviour bled and died. We co-operate directly in saving souls when we give towards the support of foreign and domestic missionaries. We should not forget that in times past our own country received from several institutions of Europe hun-

dreds of thousands of dollars for the Indian missions, and, indeed, still receives from the same source large amounts for their support. (See Third Council of Baltimore).

395. What is the meaning of the commandment not to marry within the third degree of kindred?

The meaning of the commandment not to marry within the third degree of kindred is that no one is allowed to marry another within the third degree of blood relationship.

Kindred, consanguinity, or blood relationship, is the relationship between two or more persons descending by propagation, from the same progenitors or common stock. Thus brothers and sisters and their children and grandchildren, are descendants of the same stock, a father or a mother; likewise uncles and aunts and their nephews and nieces, have for common stock either the father or mother of the former and either the grandfather or grandmother of the latter. There may thus be three ways of descending from the common stock: for the descendants may have the same father only, or the same mother only, or they may have the same father and mother; and no distinction is made between brothers and half-brothers, sisters and half-sisters. These three classes form only one line of descendants; nor is there any distinction made in blood relationship between legitimate or illegitimate children.

There may also be a double blood-relationship between several persons: e. g., two brothers may marry two sisters of another family. That the children of the two brothers of one family, are doubly related to all the children of the two sisters of the other family, is seen at a glance, because both uncle and aunt of the children of either family are of their own blood, which is not the case when two brothers or two sisters marry persons who are not related to each other.

From what has been said on the subject of kindred, we find that three things must be considered: (a) the common stock, (b) the line of descendants from that stock, and (c) the degree of nearness or propinquity of particular persons to the stock.

(a) To find the relationship between two or more persons it is necessary to find first of all a common progenitor of all of them, called the common stock, designated below as "S"; for it is evident that as we suppose them blood-relatives, they must have their origin or source in a progenitor, common to those whose kindred is sought. "S," as said before, may be a common father or mother or both.

(b) The next is the line or the manner in which persons descend from "S'. There are two lines: one straight or direct, and another collateral or transversal. By a straight line is understood a line of persons descending one from another, as father and son, father and daughter, father and granddaughter, grandmother and grandson, etc. The line of kindred is oblique or collateral, when persons descend from a common "S," but do not descend one from another: thus two cousins, uncles and nieces, aunts and nephews, are relatives in the collateral line.

(c) The last thing to be considered is the degree of nearness or propinquity to the common progenitor "S'.' In a direct line we count the number of births or propagations from "S," to the different persons whose kindred is sought, and the number of births gives the degree; or according to St. Thomas' rule (Supp. q. 54, a. 2), we count the number of persons named in the genealogy, deduct one for "S," and we have the degree.

In a collateral or transversal line, two or more persons may be equally or unequally distant from "S," but in either case the distance of each person from "S" is computed separately, in the same manner as the degree is counted in a direct line.

Let us take an example of common occurence: the banns of Matrimony between Mr. Jones, (A) and Miss Smith, (B) are proclaimed in church, and an old man, hearing the announcement, observes that the priest makes no mention of kindred as was usual in his time. He notifies the priest that the parents of (A) and (B), now deceased, were known to him and that they called each other cousins; but the old man knows nothing more. (A) and (B) make inquiry, and come back to the priest with the news that the grandfather of (A) called the grandmother of (B) Aunt Jane, what relationship exists between (A) and (B)?

If (A's) grandfather called (B's) grandmother Aunt Jane, (A's) grandfather or grandmother was Aunt Jane's brother or sister, and hence Aunt's Jane's father or mother is "S". Thus (A's) ancestors in a descending line from "S" are: 1st. (A's) great-grandfather or great-grandmother, brother or sister to Aunt Jane; second, (A's) grandfather or grandmother, nephew or niece to Jane; third, (A's) father or mother; and fourth, (A) himself. (B's) ancestors are: first, Aunt Jane, daughter of "S" and (B's) grandmother; second, (B's) father or mother; and third, (B) herself. Thus (A) is with respect to (B) in the

fourth degree of kindred, and (B) is in the third degree with respect to (A).

Remark. It is customary for parents to call their own brothers or sisters, within the hearing of their children, uncles and aunts, and this may even happen before other people, from the habit of calling them so before their children. Thus, "S" may possibly have been Aunt Jane's brother, and (A) and (B) would then be related to each other in the third degree.

From the explanation given, we find that brothers and sisters are related to each other in the first degree, uncles and nieces, aunts and nephews in the first and second degrees respectively; for uncles and aunts are nearer to the common stock "S" than their nephews and nieces. First cousins if they are equally distant from "S" in the collateral line, are related to each other in the second degree; second cousins are related in the third degress; and third cousins are related to each other in the fourth degree.

It must be remarked that when persons are unequally related to each other, they are said to be related in the degree farthest removed from "S"; e. g., uncles and aunts with respect to the nieces and nephews are related in the second degree; likewise if a son of "S" intends to marry a grandchild of the same common stock, they are related to each other in the second degree; but as a dispensation is required for such marriages, the inequality of the degree must be expressed in the petition for a dispensation, and, therefore, it would not be sufficient to say that they are related to each other in the second degree of consanguinity.

Again, if a double consanguinity exists between two parties, they should be careful to make it known to the priest, in case a dispensation for a grave cause is to be asked from the proper authority; for the marriage would be null and void, if no mention is made of it in the dispensation; e. g., (a) if "S" consisted of first, second or third cousins, or if "S" was an uncle and niece; (b) if "S" consisted of a man who married successfully two sisters; or (c) if two brothers have married two sisters, as already explained.

By ecclesiastical law the impediment of consanguinity in the collateral line makes marriage void, if contracted by parties within any degree of kindred down to the third degree. In a direct line, all marriages between any person and his or her descendants are prohibited by the law of the Church, hence no dispensation can be obtained for such marriages.

St. Thomas gives several reasons why the Church has enacted restrictive laws against marriages between blood relations: first, the reverence which kindred owe each other, being offspring of one common stock or

progenitor. Indeed, if relatives could freely intermarry, the feeling of respect which now exists between near relatives would soon change to indifference; secondly, charity is another reason, for good Catholics by marrying those of their own religion, but of different families, extend the influence of Catholic principles, the natural consequence of a virtuous and holy wedlock; thirdly, free and common intermarriage would undoubtedly open the door to a frightful laxity of morals among relatives; if they lived under the same roof or exchanged frequent and unrestricted visits, an undue and dangerous familiarity would necessarily spring up: this is the natural outcome of the loss of respect, mentioned as the first motive; fourthly, intermarriages between persons of the same blood, are, according to physicians of high standing, fraught with dire consequences to the health of their children. (Cf. St. Thos. II. 2, q. 154, a. 9).

For other impediments to Christian marriage, such as those of affinity and spiritual relationship, we refer to the exposition of the impediments of marriage given in the explanation on the Sacrament of Matrimony.

396. What is the meaning of the command not to marry privately?

The command not to marry privately means that none should marry without the blessing of God's priest or without witnesses.

Marriages should not be celebrated secretly, but publicly, so that the people at large may be acquainted with the facts of the marriage contract. In this requirement, ecclesiastical as well as civil law among civilized nations agree. It is necessary, to safeguard the rights of third parties as well as the future rights of both parties to the marriage. To publicity belongs the proclamation of the banns, of which we spoke in the lesson on Matrimony, also the necessary witnesses to the marriage, who comprise the priest as the main and principal witness, who also invokes God's blessing on the matrimonial union, and two or three other witnesses, who can in case

of necessity testify to the fact of the marriage and of the free consent of both parties. The proclamation of the banns, which makes the marriage public, is also necessary; for, as we have seen from the example in the last number, it is often expedient for the purpose of giving ample time to discover the fact and the nature of an impediment which would make a marriage null and void if contracted without dispensation.

In view of the foregoing explanation, how can it fail to astonish us, when we hear of people who object to the proclamation of the banns of their marriage. The Church, indeed, forbids as a punishment, the publication of the banns, when she frowns upon certain marriages which neither redound to the honor of God, nor can contribute to the spiritual welfare of the contracting parties, such as mixed marriages. Yet people will publish their betrothal at a banquet, at a tea party, etc., but when the Church wishes to show her approval of the proposed marriage by the publication of the banns, they will invent or unearth a multitude of reasons to have a ground for a dispensation. (Cf. Lesson Matrimony, No. 285 sq.)

397. What is the meaning of the precept not to solemnize marriage at forbidden times?

The meaning of the precept not to solemnize marriage at forbidden times is that during Lent and Advent the marriage ceremonies should not be performed with pomp or a nuptial Mass.

The occasion of a marriage brings about many festivities and gatherings among the relatives and friends of the newly married couple. The Church does not object to them, unless God is offended, and unless these great rejoicings take place at a time when the Church mourns over the incredulity and malice of the world and makes humble supplication for the coming of God's kingdom on earth, or when, at a still more sorrowful time, she bewails the sin which has caused the death of the Redeemer, and endeavors to expiate it by special penance and fasting. The first is the time of Advent, and begins with the first Sunday of Advent and ends with the joyful feast of Christmas; and the latter time

begins with Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter Sunday.

Catholics are thus urged to defer their marriage until after the two seasons, closed to matrimonial festivities, have passed; but if there be any good reason for not anticipating or deferring the marriage, it may take place in a quiet and unostentatious manner, without great pomp and rejoicings, incompatible with the times of sorrow and penance. The Church to deter her children from entering into a matrimonial union during the closed season, also forbids the celebration of nuptial Masses, unless for a just cause episcopal dispensation be obtained.

398. What is the nuptial Mass?

The nuptial Mass is a Mass appointed by the Church to invoke a special blessing upon a married couple.

All Masses are essentially the same, and although they may otherwise differ much in outward appearance, their principal difference consists in the intentions for which they are offered up. All sacrifices are necessarily offered up to God, as we have learned above, but the celebrant may apply the merits of the Mass to obtain a thousand different gifts and graces from God. A Mass is always the greatest act of worship to honor and glorify the infinite majesty of the King of kings; it is a sacrifice of thanksgiving; in it the Saviour implores from the eternal Father pardon for sinners, and begs for us whatever graces we need; but those who assist at Mass and unite their prayers with those of the spotless Lamb offered on our altars, and especially those for whom the Mass is offered up, receive the greatest share of the merits, if they are in the state of grace and unite their prayers with those of the celebrant and with Christ, the Saviour and High Priest, Who is always heard by His Father in Heaven. Thus, the priest who celebrates a nuptial Mass, prays in his own name, in the name of the Church, and in the name of the Redeemer

Himself, for the newly married couple, that God may bless their union and grant them all the graces necessary to purify their intention, sanctify their actions, and enable them to comply with all the duties of their newly chosen state.

The nuptial Mass cannot be said for a widow who received the solemn blessing before; but, where the custom prevails it may be said if the man is a widower. Under no circumstances, however, can it be said if one of the contracting parties is not a Catholic.

399. Should Catholics be married at a nuptial Mass?

Catholics should be married at a nuptial Mass, because they thereby show greater reverence for the holy Sacrament of Matrimony, and bring richer blessings upon their wedded life.

Marriages are of such importance to the contracting parties, and so much depends on them for the welfare of the human race, that there are several requisites to be observed on the occasion of a wedding.

Before the ceremony is performed, the banns must be proclaimed at the principal Mass on three consecutive Sundays, or festivals of obligation in the respective parochial churches of the contracting parties. The solemn betrothal may, but need not, precede the wedding. (Trent, Sess. 24, ch. 1, on Marriage). As an immediate preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony, the same holy Synod exhorts those about to marry, that, before they contract marriage, or, at all events, three days before the performance thereof, they carefully confess their sins, and devoutly approach the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. (Ibid.).

"If any provinces have therein in any way praiseworthy customs and ceremonies besides the aforesaid, the holy Synod earnestly desires that they be by all means retained" (Ibid), but new customs should not be adopted without the approbation of the Church, and in

case of doubt on the subject, recourse should be had to the Congregation of the Sacraments.

In the United States the wedding ceremonies are usually those laid down in the Roman Ritual, and consist of the ceremony of the Sacrament of Matrimony itself and of the Nuptial Mass, which should follow immediately.

In the ceremony of the wedding proper, the priest first asks the consent of the contracting parties in the presence of two or three witnesses. He inquires first of the groom and then of the bride: "N. N. Will you take N. N. here present for your lawful wife, (husband) according to the rite of our Holy Mother the Church?" Each one in turn answers: "I will." Thereupon the priest bids the groom and wife to join their right hands, and, where the custom exists, they pledge themselves to each other, each one in turn repeating the words after the priest, as follows: "I, N. N., take thee, N. N. for my lawful wife (husband), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part."

The groom and bride may then be told to kneel by the priest, who adds: "I join you together in marriage, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"; whereupon he sprinkles them with holy water.

In a mixed marriage the priest does not bid the parties to kneel; he also omits the blessing of the couple, and instead he simply says: "By the authority committed to me, I pronounce you united in the bonds of Matrimony."

In a marriage where both groom and bride are Catholics, the ring is then blessed with solemn prayers by the priest, who hands the consecrated ring to the groom, and the latter places it on the third or annular finger of the bride's left hand, saying at the same time: "With this ring I thee wed and I plight unto thee my troth," i. e., this ring is a sign or pledge of my consent, of my truth and fidelity. This last ceremony, with an unblessed ring, may also be used in a mixed marriage, which is thus concluded; but in a wedding between two Catholics, the priest concludes the ceremony by the prayers of the Ritual for the newly married couple.

We should not fail to note here how the Church forbids the least Christian ceremony in a mixed marriage; the priest simply assists as a necessary witness: not a prayer is said, not a blessing is pronounced; how sad! Let us learn from the attitude of the Church towards mixed marriages, how much she detests them: she allows her priest to assist at them only to avoid greater scandal, or possibly, a life of sinful cohabitation.

Why should Catholics be married at a nuptial Mass? The obligations of the married people, without speaking of the many afflictions which may befall them, are many and often arduous;

we shall mention only the principal ones. Husband and wife owe to each other sincere love, respect and fidelity, and owe to their children a parental affection, manifested by the care they take of their temporal and spiritual welfare. Children are for parents a treasure which God confides to them, and of which they must one day give a strict account. In the lesson on the fourth commandment we have learned the principal obligations of parents towards their children. Truly, married people have imposed upon themselves duties of such weight and importance, that their own spiritual welfare, the good of the Church and of society at large, depend on the manner in which they comply with their obligations towards their Maker, towards each other, and toward their offspring. Whence shall husband and wife draw fortitude, courage and constancy to fulfill their tasks scrupulously, and not shirk their share of responsibility? God alone can supply what is wanting in them; and the Church, God's representative on earth, bids the married couple to seek His aid through the special blessing of the nuptial Mass, a Mass, in which the priest, in the name of the Church, offers to the eternal Father the well-beloved Son of His bosom, in order to obtain for the newly married couple all the help they need from on high. To spurn the rite of supplication which the Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, has established, seems little short of infidelity and contempt of God's favors. In a nuptial Mass the married couple join the priest to worship God as is His due, to give Him thanks for all the graces heretofore bestowed upon them, to implore pardon for their previous offenses, but above all to invoke God's blessing on their wedlock for their temporal and spiritual welfare. This favor can be obtained only through fervent prayer, through the sanctification of the mutual love of husband and wife, and through parental affection for their offspring. God is the source of all good, but He has not promised any great blessings unless we humbly ask for them. Our prayers to be efficacious, must be united to those of the Saviour, through Whose merits alone we can expect to receive abundant blessing from His eternal Father. Among the ends for which Christ our Lord instituted the holy Sacrifice is, as we have seen, the obtaining of all graces for man. With the exception of the parts which are common to all Masses, the ceremonies and prayers of the nuptial Mass teach those attending it, the holiness of the married state, and warn husband and wife that there cannot be any true happiness for them except in the consciousness of doing their duty, and that God's favors come to those only who humbly beg them of Him in the name of Christ the Saviour, Who immolates Himself anew in the Holy Sacrifice. (Cf. No. 262 sq.). It is also to be earnestly recommended that the married couple receive Holy Communion at the nuptial Mass, to insure for themselves still greater blessings.

Much more could be said on the propriety of conforming to the urgent wish of the Church to see all her children, who embrace the holy state of Matrimony, receive the blessing of the nuptial Mass; but what has been said is sufficient to make us conclude with the catechism that Catholics should be married with a nuptial Mass, because they thereby show greater reverence for the holy Sacrament of Matrimony, and bring richer blessings upon their wedded life.

As the priest in a nuptial Mass turns twice towards the married people and invokes God's blessing upon them, once after the Pater Noster and again before the last blessing of the Mass, the married couple should kneel at the communion railing or on prie-dieus or kneeling-desks within the sanctuary. The groomsman and bridesmaid who stand behind the groom and bride during the wedding ceremony, may retain their places in the church, whilst the wedded couple kneel at the communion railing, or occupy their kneeling-desks, within the sanctuary: the latter position is preferable, if the sanctuary is spacious.

Blessing of women after childbirth.—The churching of women, as it is usually called, is a laudable custom, too much neglected in this country. It takes its origin from the Mosaic Law. (Exod. xiii. 12); or rather the mother after childbirth imitates the piety of the Blessed Virgin (Luke ii. 22), who, although she needed no purification, obeyed out of humility the Mosaic law which commanded a mother to present her male child in the temple on the fortieth day after her delivery. While the Christian mother is not bound to observe the Mosaic law, especially as to details, she should at any time shortly after childbirth present herself in the church, in order to give thanks to God for her safe delivery, and to invoke God's blessing upon herself and her newborn infant. She remains at the door of the church, until the priest, previously notified, comes to the entrance of the church, places a lighted candle in her hand, and sprinkles the kneeling mother with holy water. After a short prayer the priest places the end of his stole in her hand, and conducts her into the church, saying: "Enter thou into the temple of God, adore the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Who bestowed upon thee the fruitfulness of offspring." Whilst the humble mother kneels before the altar and pours out her heart in grateful prayer, the priest recites the proper prayers of the ritual, sprinkles her again with holy water, and dismisses her after invoking the benediction of the Blessed Trinity upon her. In many places the entire ceremony is performed at the altar-rail.

LESSON THE THIRTY-SEVENTH

ON THE LAST JUDGMENT AND THE RESURRECTION, HELL, PURGATORY, AND HEAVEN

400. When will Christ judge us?

Christ will judge us immediately after our death, and on the last day.

Christ our Saviour is to judge all men: "It is He Who was appointed by God to be Judge of the living and of the dead." (Acts x. 42). This judicial power not only belongs to Christ as God, equal in power and majesty with the Father, and therefore said to sit at the right hand of the Father, but it belongs to Him also as man, for "He (the Father) has given Him power to do judgment because He is the Son of man." (John v. 27). St. Thomas (P. III, q. 59, a. 2, 3) explains at length why Christ as God and man received from the Father the authority to judge all men; and the principal reason he gives is that Christ is the head of the whole Church, a prerogative due to the sacrifice of His life by shedding His sacred blood for the salvation of all people, and therefore God placed all things at His feet and made Him sole Judge of the living and the dead, i. e., of all people who have lived from the time of Adam and Eve, including the living or those who shall dwell on earth when its destruction is accomplished by fire, as a preliminary to the Last Judgment. Christ's judicial power extends to both Judgments, Particular and General.

401. What is the Judgment called which we have to undergo immediately after death?

The judgment we have to undergo immediately after death is called the Particular Judgment.

The doctrine of the Church regarding the judgment which all men have to undergo immediately after death,

was held also by the Jews, for Ecclesiasticus warned them as follows: "In the day of good things, be not unmindful of evils; and in the day of evils, be not unmindful of good things: for it is easy before God in the day of death to reward every one according to his ways." (Eccli. xi. 27, 28). Therefore does St. Paul refer to the Particular Judgment as a truth well understood by all who believe in a future reward: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment: so also Christ was offered once to exhaust the sins of many; the second time He shall appear without sin to them that expect Him unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 27, 28).

St. Augustine sums up the doctrine of the Church on the Particular Judgment, when he teaches that, "It is most proper and truly salutary to believe that souls are judged when they have left the body."

402. Why does Christ judge men immediately after death?

Christ judges men immediately after death to reward or punish them according to their deeds.

If there were no direct proof of the Particular Judgment taken from Holy Scripture and Tradition, still our reason would tell us that God is not likely to await thousands of years before rewarding His faithful servants: the good thief was assured by Our Lord of his happiness to begin immediately after his death, for He said to him: "This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." (Luke xxiii. 43). Therefore an immediate judgment is required; it may take but an instant, still this moment in which the all-wise and all-just God reveals to the soul its proximate and eternal destiny, is sufficient to convince the soul enlightened from on high of the justice of God's decision.

403. What are the rewards or punishments appointed for men's souls after the Particular Judgment?

The rewards or punishments appointed for men's

souls after the Particular Judgment are heaven, purgatory and hell.

404. What is hell?

Hell is a state to which the wicked are condemned, and in which they are deprived of the sight of God for all eternity, and are in dreadful torments.

Origen and his followers believed in the punishment of hell, but denied it to be everlasting. The Universalists hold the same doctrine, and although the Unitarians generally believe in the eternity of the pains of hell, many of late lean towards the Universalists on this point. The Fifth Ecumencial Council held in Constantinople in 553, has condemned Origen's doctrine as heretical. The punishment of the damned will never end, and Christ Himself has deigned to teach us the eternity of the pains of hell. "When the Son of man shall come in His majesty . . . all nations shall be gathered before Him and He shall separate them one from another. . . . Then He shall say to them also that shall be on His left hand: Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just into life everlasting." (Matt. xxv. 31 sq.).

On one occasion speaking on the awful sin of scandalizing the little ones, Christ continued, saying: "And if thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life, maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into unquenchable fire, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not extinguished." These same words are used twice more, when the Saviour speaks of the foot and the eye as causes of scandal. (Mark ix. 42 q.).

St. Paul in his epistle to the Thessalonians speaks of the "just vengeance (of God) to them who know not God, who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction." (2 Thess., i. 8, 9).

We consider it needless to cite the Doctors of the Greek and the Latin Church to prove that Tradition has constantly taught that the punishment of hell is everlasting, for the condemnation of Origen in the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 sufficiently proves the doctrine of the Church.

We know but little of the nature of the fire which torments the wicked in hell. Is it corporeal fire similar to our terrestrial fire, or is it a fire that without consuming burns souls and bodies? The Church has not decided the question. Not all things said in Holy Scripture must be taken in a literal sense, and this reservation applies especially to what our Saviour relates of the rich man Dives, and Lazarus the beggar; for our

Lord had to accommodate Himself to the intelligence of His hearers. The omnipotent and all-wise God knows how to create a variety of fires that will reach the soul as well as the body. St. Thomas, assuming that the fire of hell is a corporeal fire, teaches notwithstanding that it can cause pain to the soul, separated from the body. He quotes St. Gregory, Julian, Bishop of Toledo, the Master (Peter Lombard), and St. Augustine, and concludes that the opinions of these great men may be taken together as explaining how the soul can suffer from a corporeal or physical fire. This fire by its nature can be joined to an incorporeal spirit, as our soul is united to the body. The soul moves with the body, and when the body is in a place, the soul through its union with the body occupies a part of space. Thus, although it is not natural to a spirit to be detained as in a prison by a corporeal being, it is nevertheless possible to God to make of fire an instrument of His justice. The soul thus suffers from this unnatural companionship with fire, which detains, and, as it were, imprisons the soul and deprives it of its liberty. If the soul in this life suffers when the body is in pain, who shall limit God's power in punishing the souls of the damned by their union with an avenging fire? In this world, says St. Augustine, the soul is united to the body to give it life, and from this union it conceives a great love for the body, although the soul is the principle of the life of the body and the latter is corporeal; in like manner, the soul with the body is tied to fire, so that it may suffer pain and experience a great horror because of that union.

The sufferings of the damned in hell may be summed up as follows:

1. **The pain of loss,** which consists in the privation of the sight of God. This is considered by all the saints and Doctors of the Church the greatest of all the punishments of hell. Here on earth, we do not suffer from being deprived of God's sight, because we cannot form a concept of the blessing of seeing God face to face, and of participating in His glory and majesty, wisdom and power and in all His infinite perfections; but those that are lost will, for their greater punishment, be made acquainted in a supernatural manner of the extent of their loss and privation.

2. **The remorse of conscience:** this is the worm which dieth not, which gnaws without ceasing, as it were, at the conscience of the damned, gives the soul no rest, brings back continually the thought of how easily it could have saved itself, reproaches the soul with its folly and its ingratitude, and continually points to heaven and the delights thereof, which the soul has lost forever. Vain regrets! What an exchange it has made! For a moment of false pleasure, a satisfaction of its self-will, it has preferred hell to heaven, Lucifer to God, the

companionship of demons to the blessed company of the angelic hosts, and the lot of damned souls writhing with agony to that of the saints in Heaven whose life is a continual feast.

Add to this the dullness of the intellect, which is clear only in the knowledge of all that may aggravate the sufferings of the mind and heart; the frightful representations, which memory reproduces, regarding the horrifying scenes of the past, and among them, the awful scene of the judgment and the sight of the stern Judge, Whose fearful sentence re-echoes again and again; and finally, the totally perverted will, enraged by the miseries of the soul, seeking to wreak vengeance on God, on all the damned and on itself, but is never able to execute its purpose. Lastly, who shall describe the uncontrollable passions of the wicked condemned to hell: anger, hatred, fear, aversion, sadness and despair, without the least hope of satisfaction, reprieve or abatement?

3. **The privation of all that might bring them any consolation.** All bodily pains, as well as the sufferings of the soul, can be alleviated, whilst we still live in the flesh; but for the souls of the damned there is nothing that can soothe their pains. All their surroundings are horrifying: the fire with which they are clothed as with a garment, the companionship of those who curse one another, curse their unhappy lot and blaspheme the all-holy God, and finally, the company of demons who goad them to despair whilst they rejoice in their misery. The sufferings of the souls condemned to hell will be still further increased after the Last Judgment, when they shall be obliged to take back their horrifying bodies, the satisfaction of whose passions has caused the ruin of the greater number of souls. Here on earth the wicked try to drown their remorse of conscience, and seek consolation in the pleasures of the senses; but this solace also will be denied to the doomed souls for they cannot forget even for a moment their terrible misery. They will be punished in all their senses: in the sense of sight, by being deprived of light and of all that is agreeable to the eye: they will see only what is most horrifying in their own person and in all their surroundings; in their sense of hearing, by startling and unnerving, deafening and awe-inspiring noises of fire, by the malediction of demons and by the imprecations and the gnashing of teeth of all the damned; in their sense of smell, by the most foul and nauseating odors; in their taste, by maddening hunger and thirst that will never be satisfied; in their sense of touch, by fearful burns which will eat without destroying into the very vitals of the body, by an enraging and unquenchable lust goading to despair, and by the privation of all rest to the wornout members of the body.

No consolation can come to the souls in hell from God,

from the angels, or from the saints. Those whom God has cursed are cursed forever by all the friends of God.

4. **The dreadful and unquenchable fire.** It is not a matter of faith, that the fire of hell is corporeal, such as the fire produced by inflamable objects, wood, coal, oil, etc., or by chemicals, or by ignited gasses in proper proportions, or by electricity; all these fires are similar in their effects although produced differently: they are all corporeal and act upon corporeal substances only. Still the language of the Holy Scripture and of the great Doctors of the Church points to a material substance and not to a spiritual substance. Nevertheless, the fire of hell, although material, may have properties which fire, as known to us, has not. All fires on earth are created by God for our use: they warm, they heat, they light. Fire is destructive in wicked, careless or inexperienced hands; but who does not welcome the hearth's fire? The fire of hell is kindled by the wrath of God to avenge the insults to the Divine Majesty, and, therefore, will probably kindle in the soul all kinds of misery arising from the passions: regrets from the past, sadness and desolation for the loss of the beautiful heaven, hatred of itself, of God, of the demons who torment it, constant fear of the present and future punishments from the fire, to which it is bound and from which it determines to free itself; it is angered, yea, maddened to fury against obstacles in its flight, bold in its attempts to escape, but detained by an invisible hand, and thus it lives in continual despair: death would be a boon, a thousand times preferable, but death never comes.

But we can better understand the sad plight of the damned after the general resurrection, when the soul will be re-united to the body, the accomplice of its revolt against its Maker, after it has heard the dreadful sentence: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." Then, the physical pain of the body, caused by the fire which will burn without consuming and eat into every member, will be felt also in every part of the soul; but I leave the dreadful scene to the imagination of the reader; nevertheless, we should add that our imagination will fall short of the reality, for "as it is written: that eye hath not seen nor ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. ii. 9), it is equally true that no words can express, nor imagination conceive the sufferings and miseries of them who hate Him, i. e., of them that have died in mortal sin: God is equally faithful and just in punishing the sinner and in rewarding the virtuous.

5. **The eternity of the pains of hell** is a dogma of our Faith, and it is its never-ending eternity that intensifies all the other sufferings of the damned, and drives them to despair. The loss of God and heaven will be eternal; and millions of

years will pass, and not a gleam of hope of regaining God's friendship will come from the just and inexorable Judge, now so merciful to the sinner; centuries will succeed one another, and the undying worm of remorse will still gnaw at the sinners' conscience; and in all that time not a word of consolation will come to the damned souls; the unquenchable fire prepared for the devil and his angels, i. e., for all those who fought under his standard, must forever burn, and will never die out; as long as God exists the fearful fire will burn with unabated fury.

But does it not seem unreasonable that for a moment's satisfaction, for an unlawful pleasure of short duration, Justice should demand an eternity of sufferings? There are many weighty reasons why the punishments of the wicked who have died in mortal sin, should be everlasting.

(A) The unrepenting sinners remain forever impenitent after their death: they die in open revolt against their God and, like the demons in hell, persevere for an endless eternity in their obstinacy. Repentance is for them an impossibility, for the grace of conversion is granted only during our time of probation on earth; they are incapable of sorrow or compunction, or of any good thought or affection, and God cannot bestow His pardon on wilfully obdurate sinners. Therefore it is not proper to say that God punishes eternally the sinful satisfaction of a moment, since the sinner perseveres obstinately and eternally in his sin of rebellion. Besides Faith teaches us that God gives to all men sufficient graces to save themselves, that he who is lost, must attribute his loss to himself alone. It is true that the victory is won by a few years in God's service, and that damnation may follow the commission of even a single sin, e. g., if any one dies in the act of sinning, as in the case of a suicide; but the unrepenting sinner had it in his power to choose either an eternity of glory or one of never-ending misery. God has decreed from all eternity to leave to man the choice of his future state, heaven or hell; shall He at any time hereafter reverse His decrees for the benefit of the wicked?

(B) All laws must have an adequate sanction to deter the evil-doer from breaking them and from relapsing into the same crimes, "as the dog that returneth to his vomit." (Prov. xxvi. 11; 2 Peter, ii. 22). Human laws have for object the temporal welfare of the individual, but divine laws mainly regard the eternal welfare of all. The former are imperfect because the sanctions attached to them do not extend beyond this life. They become nevertheless perfect by God's authority, by His approval of all just laws, and by His perfect and complete sanction. This explains why God-fearing people only can be trusted for the conscientious observance of all our civil laws. Culprits may elude the vigilance of the civil officers, but their offenses, whether interior or exterior, cannot escape the far-seeing eye

of God. The main reason for which divine laws excel just and equitable human laws, is that their sanction extends beyond the grave, and, in all matters of great importance, for all time to come. If its application were not of an endless duration, there would be something lacking to God's sanction: the evil-doer could defy God, and the conviction that there would be an end to his misery, would harden him in his obstinacy.

(C) The punishment should be proportionate to the offense. Now, a mortal sin is an offense of an infinite malice: when we compare the guilt of two deeds, we consider not only each act in itself and its intrinsic evil, but also the person to whom offense is given. Thus, it is a greater sin to offend a superior than an inferior, and an offense against superiors of different rank increases in proportion to the dignity of the offended. Now, between the greatest monarch on earth and the King of kings there is an infinite distance, and, therefore, it is infinitely more wicked to sin against God than against man. A crime infinite in wickedness demands a punishment infinite in torment and pain, of which man by nature is not capable; but as man can live forever, his punishment may be infinite as to time, and, therefore, the pains of hell must be everlasting.

(D) St. Jerome, who was always intent upon expiating his sins by the most severe penances, adds another argument to prove the eternity of the reprobates' punishment after their life of probation: the difference between virtue and vice, he maintains, is infinite, and it must be preserved forever. If we hold that the fire of hell is quenchable, then there will be a time when virtue and vice will be one and the same thing, at least in their consequences, for then the greatest criminals will be on an equal footing with the greatest saints. What? Will there be no difference after an indefinite number of years between the angels and the demons, between the Apostles and their persecutors, between the martyrs and their murderers? Since the theory, which supposes an end to the punishments of hell, leads to an absurd conclusion, the supposition itself must be false.

405. What is Purgatory?

Purgatory is the state in which those suffer for a time who die guilty of venial sins, or without having satisfied for the punishment due to their sins.

The catechism by teaching us who they are that suffer in Purgatory, gives us thereby also the reason of the existence of Purgatory: for every sin, of whatever nature or kind, whether grievous or venial, the justice of God demands full satisfaction. We have learned al-

ready that mortal and venial sins are remitted in the Sacrament of Penance: if our confession is worthy, the eternal punishment due to all mortal sins is remitted, but there often remains some temporal punishment due to those sins, to be satisfied for in this life or in the next, i. e., in Purgatory. We have learned also, in lesson the nineteenth, why God requires a temporal punishment as a satisfaction for sin, even after the sin is forgiven and the eternal punishment due to it is remitted. "If anyone says that, after the grace of sanctification has been received, the guilt is remitted to every penitent sinner and the debt of eternal punishment is washed away in such a manner that there remains no further debt of temporal punishment to be discharged either in this world, or in the next in Purgatory, before the gates of the kingdom of Heaven can be opened to him, let him be anathema." (Trent, Sess. 6, Can. 30). Besides, but a few people confess all their venial sins, and nevertheless God will demand a full satisfaction for every venial sin, whether fully deliberate or not: "Nothing defiled can enter Heaven." (Apoc. xxi. 27). Where shall the last stain on the soul be washed away before it can enter into the presence of the all-holy God? Evidently, in a place of purification, called, therefore Purgatory, where the soul will be detained until it has by suffering fully paid all its debt, resulting from the temporal punishment due to mortal sins and from the satisfaction due to unforgiven venial sins.

We will now first prove that there is such a place of purgation, and then we shall see what we are taught respecting the nature of its punishment.

Catholics are bound to believe that "there is a Purgatory and that the souls detained therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable Sacrifice of the Altar." (Trent, Sess. 25, On Purgatory).

The doctrine of the Church on Purgatory is also the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures and of Tradition, and hence, the sects, who follow in the footsteps of Calvin and declare that Purgatory is an invention of Satan, do not find it an easy task to make their teachings conform to Holy Writ and to the belief and practice of the first centuries of the Church.

We read in the second book of Machabees that Judas, the leader of the Jews in the victorious battle against Georgias, Governor of Idumea, came with his men to bury the bodies of the Jewish soldiers slain in battle. "They found under the coats of the slain some of the donaries of the idols of Jamnia which the law forbiddeth to the Jews (to keep); so that all plainly saw that for this cause they were slain." (2 Mach. xii. 40). To blot out this sin, "Judas making a gathering (collection) sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. (For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead.) And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is, therefore, a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins." (Ibid. 43-46).

It is plain (a) that there is question here of those who were in the state of grace when they were killed in battle; but as they had in their possession offerings made to idols, which were forbidden them, the sin should be expiated; (b) that it was customary for the Jewish people to offer up sacrifices for the dead; (c) that they believed the prayers of the living would help their dead comrades. We should remark also that as the Jews have always prayed for the dead even until our day, as their rituals testify, and since neither Christ nor His Apostles ever warned the Jews that such customs should not be tolerated, we must presume, even if we had no direct proof of it, that it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead.

Our Saviour, speaking of the sin against the Holy Ghost, says: "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come." (Matt. xii. 32). It would be senseless to say that the sins against the Holy Ghost shall be forgiven neither here nor hereafter, if there were not some sins that will be forgiven in the next world. Therefore, St. Augustine, St. Gregory, St. Isidore of Seville, Venerable Bede, St. Bernard and others, prove from this passage the existence of a Purgatory. (Bellarmine, Book 2, ch. 4, On Purgatory).

St. Paul (1 Cor. iii. 10 sq.) teaches us that the spiritual edifice must be built on Christ, the foundation-stone and on the good works of people, which may be compared to gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and stubble to be tested by fire: "If any man's work abide, which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." (Ibid. 14, 15). All the Fathers of the Latin Church and the Fathers of the Council of Florence see in this citation a reference to the fire

of Purgatory. Calvin concluded that as the words gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and stubble are to be taken in a figurative sense, so fire must also be thus understood; but that does not follow as a consequence: by gold, stubble, etc,, are clearly meant man's works, and by "fire" we must at least understand something that purifies and saves the soul of man.

The argument of prescription proves conclusively that the belief in Purgatory comes to us from the Apostles themselves. When Calvin and nearly all the heretics of the sixteenth century began to inveigh against the practice of offering up prayers and sacrifices for the dead, all the liturgies (Mass books) in use contained prayers for the deceased; so that Isidore of Seville, who died in 636, and was, in his life-time, called by the Council of Toledo, the doctor of his century and the ornament of the Church, could write with truth: "We believe that the practice of offering the Sacrifice and prayers for the repose of the faithful departed, because it is kept through the whole world, was delivered to us by the Apostles themselves. This is held by the Catholic Church everywhere; for unless she believed that sins are forgiven to the faithful departed, she would neither give alms nor offer a Sacrifice to God for their souls."

All the most ancient liturgies (Mass books) contain prayers for the dead, so that even the Oxford divines are forced to admit that the universal custom of praying for the dead is proved by the ritual of the Church: "Let it be recollected that we are not disputing the existence, in the ritual of the Church, of the custom of praying for the dead." (Oxford Tracts, No. 79, p. 20). All the Christian sects of the Orient offer up twice a year the Holy Sacrifice, and pray for those who have piously died in the Lord; and the Greeks with the Latins, in the Council of Florence, subscribed to the Catholic doctrine: viz., "If penitents died in the charity of God, before they have satisfied for their sins of commission or omission by a worthy proof of penance, their souls are purified after their death by cleansing pains, and the suffrages of the living are useful to relieve them of such pains." (Can. 29). The Third and Fourth Councils of Carthage (Can. 79) also give rules to be observed in the prayers for the dead.

From all what has been said on the subject of Purgatory, we must conclude that the belief of the Church, so constant and universal, must have its origin in the teachings of the Apostles. Two testimonies clearly support our conclusion: "The Apostles," says St. John Chrysostom, "decreed that in the Sacrifice of the Mass, prayer should be offered for the dead." (Hom. 69). And St. Denis, the Areopagite (Eccl. Hier. Part III, Ch. 7),

gives us the prayers for the dead, and he testifies that he received them from the Apostles. We consider it therefore superfluous to cite any other of the Greek and Latin Doctors of the early Church.

In what do the sufferings of Purgatory consist? Although the Church has never decided the question regarding the nature of the purgatorial fire, almost all theologians of the Latin Rite teach that Purgatory is situated near the hell of the damned, and that the fire of Purgatory is in all respects similar to that of hell, except in duration, for the avenging purgatorial fire will be extinguished after the General Judgment, as is evinced by the words addressed by the Supreme Judge to the elect on His right and the reprobate on His left. The Greek Fathers of the Council of Florence maintained that the Oriental churches, although admitting the existence of Purgatory, were opposed to belief in a punishment by physical or corporeal fire, and probably for that reason, no decree was passed by the Fathers, who above all desired to maintain peace and concord between all the members of the Latin and Oriental rites, and to insure, if possible, unanimity in all their decisions; for similar reasons, the Fathers of the Council of Trent abstained from issuing a decree, regarding the nature of the purgatorial fire.

Assuming that the fire of hell and Purgatory are alike, the souls of Purgatory suffer: (a) from the pain of loss, as they are deprived of the sight of God until the last farthing of their debt is paid (Matt. v. 26); (b) the torment of fire; (c) remorse of conscience for having through their own fault brought God's just punishment on themselves, which they could so easily have escaped; (d) finally, other sufferings, like those coming from the lamentations of their companions imprisoned with them, from the knowledge of the duration of their detention, of which every hour is like a century, and probably we should add other pains corresponding to the malice of each one's sins; for it seems proper that those who sinned through pride should be humiliated, that the envious on earth should be tormented with envious sentiments of the happiness of the blessed, that those who on earth were indifferent to their neighbor's sufferings, should now be saddened by their companions' indifference to their desolation, etc. Yet, although these souls are purified

and are saved "as by fire," and, therefore, do suffer dreadful torments, they are nevertheless consoled by the conviction that their sufferings will come to an end, that they remain in charity, and that an eternal glory awaits them after they shall have fully satisfied for the punishment due to their sins.

406. Can the faithful on earth help the souls in Purgatory?

The faithful on earth can help the souls in Purgatory by their prayers, fasts, alms-deeds; by indulgences, and having Masses said for them.

We premise the following truths:

1. Faith teaches us that Christ Jesus is the Head of the Church, for "He (God) hath made Him (Christ) Head over all the Church" (Ephes. i. 22), and that whatever spiritual good comes to the members of His mystical body, is but a participation in the merits of the Saviour, for "of His fullness we have all received." (John i. 16).

2. In the Thirty-first Lesson (328-331) we learned that the souls in Purgatory are members of the mystical body of Christ, for they are members of the Communion of Saints, which comprises the living members of the Catholic Church on earth, called the militant Church, the souls of Purgatory, called the suffering Church, and the saints in heaven, called the triumphant Church.

3. The souls in Purgatory are detained therein until they have satisfied the justice of God for their venial sins, and for the temporal punishment due to their mortal sins, notwithstanding that the guilt of their mortal sins and the eternal punishment due to them have already been remitted.

4. Since in hell there is no forgiveness, the souls of the damned can receive no help from the living. (405).

5. The fire of Purgatory remits the guilt of venial sin, either by the pains the soul suffers patiently or through the soul's humble acceptance of its just punishment, at the time it was condemned in the Particular Judgment to pay its whole debt; for, although a soul after this life can neither merit nor demerit, so as to change its state or condition after life, it can by its sufferings shorten its detention and imprisonment, and efface the last stain of its guilt. While we are not taught in what manner the guilt of venial sin is remitted, it must be done in Purgatory, for as long as there remains any guilt, there must be some satisfaction still due to it, as the Angelic Doctor teaches us. Furthermore, our good God may remit the entire guilt of venial and mortal sins, and still require a temporal punishment for them.

6. God has not revealed how long the souls are detained in Purgatory to make full satisfaction for every venial sin and to expiate the temporal punishment due to forgiven sins; but as God has often punished upon earth even venial sins in a frightful manner, and as the Church permits foundations for Masses extending over many years, we should conclude that some souls at least remain in Purgatory a long time.

We now come to the main question at issue: Can the faithful on earth help the souls in Purgatory and in what manner?

It is a dogma of our Faith that, although we cannot confess the sins of others, or through sorrow and contrition obtain forgiveness for them, we can nevertheless satisfy for the temporal debt or punishment that others have contracted through their sins, as we can in this life pay our neighbor's pecuniary debts or other obligations. Charity has more power before God than charity among men, provided always that he that makes satisfaction and he for whom satisfaction is offered are both in the state of grace. We may apply this principle to the souls in Purgatory, for there is also a community of interests between the militant Church and the suffering Church, as Christ our Saviour, the Head of the faithful on earth, is likewise the Head of the souls in Purgatory, and He accepts the meritorious work of the living as payment or satisfaction of a part or the whole of the debt due from the souls of the suffering Church.

Can a person in mortal sin perform any meritorious work that may help the poor souls? St. Thomas (Supp. q. 71, a. 3) answers this question by saying that a sinner, who acts in the name of the Church, e. g., a priest who performs the funeral rites over a deceased person, helps the souls in Purgatory; and the same must be said if the sinner is only employed as an instrument: e. g., a dying person leaves in his will one hundred Masses for the repose of his soul, and the executor of his will pays over to a priest the stipend for one hundred Masses: if the executor be in mortal sin, the Masses bequeathed by one who died in the state of grace, will benefit the testator's soul, even if the executor of his will be not in the state of grace.

Does he who offers his prayers or suffrages for the poor souls derive any benefit from the good work? His prayers merit for himself an increase of grace, as he performs an act of

charity; but by his charitable deed he cannot pay his own indebtedness, and satisfy at the same time for the temporal punishment of his neighbor, still living in the flesh, or whose soul is still detained in Purgatory. It must be accepted as certain that they who live in the state of sin cannot condignly merit any grace for themselves, but as charity is always acceptable to God, the prayers of the sinner for the poor souls may nevertheless be of help to them and so secure for the sinner powerful advocates in Heaven.

The principal means by which the faithful on earth may help the souls in Purgatory, are: prayers, fasts, alms-deeds, indulgences, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The most useful of all those means, singly taken, is undoubtedly the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, especially if the Sacrifice is accompanied by the fervent Communions of those who offer with the priest that most effective of all aids for the relief of any or of all the souls. St. Thomas (Supp., q. 61, a. 9) gives the following reasons for this efficacy: Christ Himself unites His prayers with those of the priest and the faithful, and the Sacrifice promotes a greater union between the Church militant and the suffering Church, whose Head Christ is.

Prayers for the dead are very acceptable to God, as we have seen, and besides they obtain great graces for the suppliant, for his charity cannot remain unrewarded. Fasts mortify our passions and the concupiscence of the flesh, but, on account of the suffering or hardship inseparable from them, they also remit the temporal punishment due to sin and this satisfaction may be applied to the suffering souls.

By alms-giving for the benefit of the poor souls, we forego the pleasure of employing for our own use, what we give in charity, and in that sense, it is like the foregoing, a mortification; but, moreover, we practice a double charity: one towards the needy and one towards the souls, and both charities are meritorious of eternal life and contribute to the alleviation of our brethren of the suffering Church, for whose benefit the alms are

given. Indulgences are too much neglected, for they are an inexhaustible source from which we can draw much help for the souls in Purgatory, provided the particular indulgence we strive to gain, be applicable to them. (229-233).

We mention three other important means of succoring the helpless souls: the sacramentals of the Church, ejaculatory prayers offered for that intention, especially indulgenced ones, and above all the Heroic Act.

The Heroic Act of Charity, as explained above in No. 331, consists in resigning in favor of the poor souls, all the satisfactory effect of our good works, all the indulgences we can gain during life, and all the suffrages applied to us after death by those on earth. This act is in the nature of a vow, although it may be retracted without sin, unless one should have vowed not to retract it; and nothing else is required for it than to offer up to God for the benefit of the helpless souls, all our indulgences and the satisfaction attached to all our good works. But this cession does not include the merits of our good actions, such as the forgiveness of venial sins through charity or love of God, the increase of habitual grace or the right to new graces: these we cannot give away. Thus, the only thing we can part with in behalf of the living and the dead, is what in our good action would satisfy for the temporal punishment due to our own sins. (216 sq.).

As it is more meritorious to satisfy for the punishment imposed on other members of the suffering Church than to satisfy for our own, because the greater the charity the greater the merit, the Church approves of the Heroic Act, and has granted special privileges to those who have made it: priests enjoy the advantage of the privileged altar every time they offer up the Holy Sacrifice, and the faithful gain a plenary indulgence each time they devoutly receive Holy Communion, and also every Monday on which they assist at Mass and pray for the intention of the Holy Father: this last privilege holds good for children who have not yet been admitted to the Holy Table. Furthermore, if for some good reason the faithful cannot assist

at Mass on Monday, they may gain the same indulgence on the following Sunday by hearing the Mass of obligation.

407. What is the judgment called which all men have to undergo on the last day?

The judgment which all men have to undergo on the last day is called the General Judgment.

In the Particular Judgment, which occurs immediately after death, the soul alone is judged, but in the General Judgment both the soul and the body are judged in the sight of all the people who ever lived on earth. The resurrection of the dead, when the body will again be reunited to the soul, must then precede the Last Judgment.

The truth of the resurrection has been handed down to us by the Apostles, for one of the articles of the Apostles' Creed is: I believe in the resurrection of the body. In the time of the Apostles there were some nominal Christians who denied that dogma of our Faith, among whom St. Paul mentions Hymeneus and Philetus, "who have erred from the truth, saying, that the resurrection is past already." (2 Tim. ii. 17, 18).

Among the Jews, when Christ lived among men, the Sadducees rejected the belief in the resurrection of the body and they were therefore considered as heretics by all orthodox Jews.

The holy man Job clearly taught the belief, when, in the midst of his sufferings and tribulations, forsaken and deserted by his friends and by his nearest relatives, he wished that his words, his profession of faith, might be written in a book or graven in flint-stone: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God, Whom I myself shall see and my eyes shall behold, and not another: this my hope is laid up in my bosom." (Job xix. 25-27).

After Lazarus had died, Christ visited Mary and Martha, the dead man's sisters. Martha, sobbing and weeping, said to Jesus: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. . . . Jesus saith to her: Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith to Him: I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection on the last day." (John xi. 21-24). No comment is necessary.

St. Paul inculcates the belief in the resurrection as an article of faith, (1 Cor. xv. 12 sq.) and writing to the Corinthians, he proves our resurrection by the resurrection of Christ. "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive." (Ib. 22). He also answers an objection to that dogma of our Faith: "But

some man will say: How do the dead rise again? Or with what manner of body shall they come? Senseless man, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die first. . . . It (the body) is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption." (Ibid. 35 sq.).

We omit the testimony of the early Fathers, for it is well known that it was the belief in the resurrection that encouraged the early Christians, as well as those of a later day, in their sufferings, in all manner of persecution and in the practice of the most heroic virtues; so that Tertullian could say truthfully: "The Christians' hope is the resurrection of the dead." (Lib. de Resur. Carnis).

408. If everyone is judged immediately after death, what need is there of a general judgment?

There is need of a general judgment, even though everyone is judged immediately after death, in order that the providence of God which, on earth, often permits the good to suffer and the wicked to prosper, may in the end appear just before all men.

The catechism here gives one great reason why there should be a general judgment at the consummation of the world. Besides, the actions of men are subject to fluctuation and change, and they are undetermined in their consequences, and, therefore, although God fully foresees, at the moment of each one's death, the beneficial results of good example and the pernicious consequences of scandal in his case, people could not grasp the full justice of God's judgment until all the actions of men are fully determined in all their consequences, whether for good or evil, which can only happen at the consummation of the world, when all things shall have come to light. (Cf. St. Thos. P. III, q. 59, a. 5). Omitting other reasons given by the Angelic Doctor and other learned theologians, we may mention that at the Particular judgment, the body was not present, and, hence, besides the Private Judgment another judgment has with propriety been decreed in the Councils of the Most High, so that the body may, before the eyes of all, share in the rewards and punishments of the soul, as the catechism teaches in the following number.

409. Will our bodies share in the reward or punishment of our souls?

Our bodies will share in the reward or punishment of our souls, because through the resurrection they will again be united to them.

From the foregoing scriptural citations, especially those from Job and St. Paul, regarding the resurrection of the body, we necessarily conclude that we shall rise on the last day, each one in his own body, and not in a new body or in the body of another, as some maintained in the time of Tertullian, who ridiculed the heretical opinion as utterly untenable: "How absurd and iniquitous," says he, "and likewise how unworthy of God that one substance should labor and another should reap the reward and that the flesh of one man should be lacerated through martyrdom and that of another crowned."

Unbelievers object that our bodies during life lose old elements and gain new ones, and that, according to learned physiologists, all parts of an adult body are renewed every seven years, and children's bodies in a much shorter time, and that consequently some people at least have lived wickedly in one body, and virtuously in another. But no scientist can prove that, notwithstanding those changes of material elements, the body of our childhood and youth is not the same body as that of maturer age. Our Omnipotent Creator, Who alone makes worlds out of nothing, and annihilates what He creates, Who changes the accidents of a corporeal body without alteration in its substance, will also be able to gather the elements of each one's body, so that its identity will not be lost.

Although all men shall rise in their own bodies, they shall not rise equal, for it seems fitting and just that the body, the instrument of the soul for good or evil, which shared on earth its joy and sorrow, shall also share its reward or punishments after this life, so that "everyone may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil." (2 Cor. v; 10).

410. In what state will the bodies of the just rise?

The bodies of the just will rise glorious and immortal.

God has deigned to reveal to us with what properties the bodies of the elect will be endowed (1 Cor. xv. 35 sq.): they are brightness, or an outward splendor arising from the heavenly beauty and lustre of the soul; agility, so that the body may not be a burden to the soul's spirituality: this endowment will allow the body to be transferred, in union with the soul from one place to another with the rapidity of thought; subtilty, so that in company with the soul, it may pass through the hardest and densest material substances; impassibility, i. e., freedom from suffering, and, therefore, from corruption.

Brightness corresponds to the glory which St. Paul mentions, when he compares our present body to seed that is sown and dies but is quickened unto life: "The bodies of the just shall rise in glory" (l. c. 43); agility and subtilty correspond to what St. Paul calls power and spirituality: "It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body" (l. c. 43, 44); and impassibility, unchangeableness and the blessed immortality, properties which flow one from another as well as from its spirituality, correspond to the incorruptibility in the Apostle's comparison: "It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption." (l. c. 42).

411. Will the bodies of the damned also rise?

The bodies of the damned will also rise, but they will be condemned to eternal punishment.

The bodies of the wicked will also rise at the blast of the last trumpet (l. c. 52) that calls all people to judgment, but frightful to behold in their obscurity and loathsomeness: they shall be heavy and course, slow in their movements and fitted only for suffering. On them the dreadful judgment will be spoken by the just Judge: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. xxv. 34).

Remark. Our practice of Christian burial rests chiefly on our belief in a general resurrection; not that we think that it would be any more difficult for our Creator to reunite the elements of our bodies, if they

were cremated, but because our Christian burials conform to the scriptural teaching, that we are dust and into dust we shall return. Our forefathers in the faith were laid to rest in graves and tombs, whilst cremation is essentially pagan. It is then with good reason that the Church forbids the pagan rite of cremation.

412. What is Heaven?

Heaven is the state of everlasting life in which we see God face to face, are made like unto Him in glory, and enjoy eternal happiness.

Man by nature seeks happiness, which is not of this world, as nothing on earth can fully satisfy the desires of his heart. There are essentially two operations in man's soul: that of the intellect and that of the will. The intellect is first in action, and nothing will completely satisfy it, but the vision of the Supreme Good, in the enjoyment of which the soul will be satisfied. Thus, the supreme happiness of Heaven consists in the vision or contemplation of God's essence, or in seeing God face to face, "for (now) we know in part . . . But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. . . . We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known." (1 Cor. xiii. 9-12).

The beatific vision will make us similar to God in the possession of the Infinite Good: "We are now the sons of God; and it has not yet appeared what we shall be. We know when He shall appear, we shall be like to Him; because we shall see Him as He is." (1 John iii. 2).

When we say that the happiness in Heaven consists in the sight of God, we do not wish to intimate that in Heaven the will of man shall have not part in his happiness, but that the sight of God's infinite beauty and loveliness will irresistibly attract the will, for who can help loving what is infinitely beautiful and good? The contemplation of God's essence is the cause of that love,

and that love of the Infinite God engenders unspeakable delight. (Cf. St. Thos., I. 2, q. 3, 4).

Although the happiness of Heaven is without mixture of evil, and the knowledge of the elect is free from error, there will be many degrees of happiness in accordance with each one's merits; for "In the house of My Father," says the Saviour, "there are many mansions" (John xiv. 2). And why should there be a difference between the blessed, so that St. Paul, discoursing on the resurrection, could say: "Other is the brightness of the sun, other the brightness of the moon, other the brightness of the stars. For star differs from star in brightness and so shall be the resurrection of the dead"? Simply because each one will receive his proper reward according to his labor, for "he who sows sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he who sows abundantly shall reap abundantly." (2 Cor. ix. 6).

The same doctrine is laid down as an article of Faith in the Council of Florence, in a decree subscribed to by the Fathers of the Oriental and Western Churches.

From the explanation given above, we should conclude that the happiness of each one among the elect depends on the more or less perfect sight of God's essence; nevertheless, no one, not even the Mother of Jesus, will have such intimate knowledge of God's nature as fully to comprehend it. God alone comprehends Himself in the true and full sense of the word, and God could not create a being like Himself, another God, capable of comprehending the Infinite. All the elect will see God clearly, without obscurity, and understand His nature without mixture of error; but the most exalted creature cannot comprehend the infinitely beautiful and lovable nature of God. It is in this sense that we must understand the words of St. Paul, quoted above: "Then I shall know even as I am known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12),, i. e., I shall know clearly according to the capacity of my intellect, but never with that absolutely perfect and full understanding of God's essense, which we call comprehension.

If anyone should ask a description of the delights and joys of Heaven, the wisest and deepest thinker, if he attempt an answer, will like a child stammer and speak confusedly, or rather he will exclaim with St. Paul, "who was caught up into Paradise and heard secret words, which are not granted to man to utter" (2 Cor. xii. 4), "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither

hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for them that love Him." (1 Cor. ii. 9).

The beatitude of the elect consists essentially in the contemplation and possession of God, but their happiness is further increased by the society of myriads of angels and saints, who will all participate in the same glory and the same delights; for the diversity of rewards will necessarily contribute to the happiness of the body as well as of the soul. The sight of the glorious King of Heaven, the Mother of the Saviour and our Mother, if beheld only for a moment, would embolden the beholder willingly and gladly to suffer the combined torments of all the martyrs; therefore, we should sigh for the day when God's glory will be revealed to us, and we shall behold our loving Mother gloriously crowned. What must be the beauty of the Queen of Heaven, whom the Church addresses so lovingly: "Pulchra es Maria et macula originalis non est in te."—Thou art beautiful, O Mary, and there is no original stain in thee.

413. What words should we bear always in mind?

We should always bear in mind these words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul, or what exchange shall a man give for his soul? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then will he render to every man according to his works." (Matt. xvi. 26, 27).

The closing scene of the immense drama that is being enacted upon earth and in which every living man or woman acts his or her part, should impress itself deeply upon our mind. The first scene of the drama was laid by God, our Creator, in a terrestrial paradise about six thousand years ago, and the date of the concluding scene, the General Judgment, is unknown to men and angels. The central figure in the drama is Christ, the God-Man, the Seed of the woman, the Leader in battle of mighty hosts; and whoever fights under His banner is sure of final victory. But He admits only heroes among His voluntary followers, heroes who vanquish His and their own enemies, the world, the devil and our corrupted nature. Actors succeed one

another: some are slain in battle, but are covered with glory, others shamefully abandon the fight and die the coward's death; but the epic drama must continue until the day "He (God) hath appointed wherein He, the Captain, will judge the world in equity." (Acts xvii. 31).

With the Last Judgment and the awarding of recompense to each actor according to his merits, the immense drama closes amidst the triumphant peans of the victors, who enter into everlasting bliss, and amidst the wails and imprecations of the vanquished, whose miserable doom is sealed for an endless eternity.

Thus will end the great drama enacted upon this terrestrial globe as well as the time set by God for our probation. It is for us to choose between eternal happiness and endless woe: there will be no longer a middle state, when the curtain has fallen on the last act. (405). Purgatory ends with the Judgment, and as to this earth, the stage of the epic drama, fire will purify it according to the teachings of the Prince of the Apostles: "But the heavens and the earth which are now . . . are reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment and perdition of the ungodly man. . . . But the day of the Lord shall come like a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence, and the elements shall be melted with heat and the earth and the works which are in it, shall be burnt up. . . . But we look for new heavens and a new earth according to His promise, in which justice dwelleth." (2 Peter, iii. 7, sq.).

Blessed be the Father Who hath created me; blessed be the Son Who hath redeemed me; blessed be the Holy Ghost Who hath sanctified me. Blessed be the most holy and indivisible Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.

Blessed be God in His angels and in His saints. Amen.

APPENDIX I

REVELATION

Man with the aid of his sound reason, alone, is conscious that he has not made himself, but owes his existence to a necessary, self-existent Being, God. The whole universe proclaims the glory of God and only "the fool says in his heart, there is no God." From this simple truth we must conclude that man has contracted obligations towards his Maker, Who necessarily demands a recognition of His favors from his rational creatures. Man is also a moral being, and distinguishes between virtue and vice; he is a social being by nature, for he needs the help of others for his use and comfort, and for the preservation of his life, e. g., during his helpless condition of childhood.

The study of man's relations with his Creator and with his fellow-men, and the consideration of the moral obligations which depend on them, and of which conscience is a stern witness, discloses to him many natural truths, such as the worship due to the Creator, the Source and Origin of all that we see in us and around us, the virtues we must practice, the vices we must shun, and the duties we must discharge towards our fellow-men and towards ourselves. Man has a corporeal body and a spiritual soul, and his whole being must adore, worship and obey Him from Whom he holds whatever he is and whatever he has. He, therefore, owes his Maker an interior and exterior worship. We might go on, and with the aid of great and learned men, of a Plato, an Aristotle or a Cicero, arrive at the knowledge of a natural religion, and frame a code of laws acceptable to the deists; but people in general have neither the time nor the inclination to attempt such serious studies, and the experience of the past convinces us that a system of dogmatic religion and moral philosophy, framed with the light of reason only, would not be free from many serious errors and would fail to gain the assent of the greatest number of men. It is an undeniable fact that a religion based on dogmas and morals excogitated by reason only, has never existed. Let us add that many truths, claimed as the product of man's reason, were already known to the Hebrews, and as these held them as revealed by God, philosophers deceived themselves when they ascribe all the truths they possess to man's power of reasoning or to the inventive genius of deep thinkers, who undoubtedly borrowed many truths from the sacred writers of the Old Testament.

Many truths, especially those regarding man's moral obligations, rest on revelation as well as on the natural law mysteriously inscribed in man's heart. This is what St. Paul teaches

when he says that "when the Gentiles who have not the (revealed) law, do by nature (i. e., by following the dictates of their conscience) those things that are of the (revealed) law; these having not the (revealed) law are a law to themselves," i. e., they observe the natural law inscribed in their hearts. (Rom. ii. 14). We conclude from this that although there are many natural truths we can acquire by force of reasoning, still even for those truths a revelation was morally necessary, for otherwise but very few people would acquire the knowledge of them. Even then, how many deplorable errors would vitiate the scanty results of years of labor and toil!

Man is in possession of many supernatural truths regarding the nature of God, of himself and of his destiny. For these, it is plain that a supernatural revelation is absolutely necessary, as man unaided cannot exceed his natural power. Did God make known to man any supernatural truths, relating to His own nature? Was man made acquainted with his destiny, and is that destiny supernatural? Did God prescribe for man any conditions for the attainment of his destiny, or demand any particular service to merit it? These are vital and all-important questions, which a sane man will not fail to solve for himself so as to shape his conduct in accordance with his conclusions; for on it his eternal welfare depends, if he is destined to a better life after the present.

From the foregoing we learn that there is a twofold revelation, natural and supernatural. God reveals Himself in all His works: in the order, variety and stability of the universe; in all laws which govern it and in His love for man which they disclose. Man is the masterpiece of the world: his nature, composed of a material body and a spiritual soul, is a connecting link between the material world and its Creator and Preserver; he is endowed with an intellect to know his Benefactor and with a will to love Him and to bring the whole material universe with him to do homage to the Lord of the heavens above and of the earth beneath.

The natural relations existing between the Creator and Preserver and His rational creatures on earth, impose upon the latter a natural religion, for religion—a word most probably derived from "religare" (to bind, to attach)—is a bond or a union existing between God and His rational creature, man, and it consists of all the obligations which result from the natural relationship between man and the Author and Preserver of his existence.

But in the supposition that God created man for a supernatural end, He necessarily acquainted man with it, as well as with the supernatural means to reach it; and thus a new bond results from this more noble destiny: the bond of a supernat-

ural religion, a religion based on the new relations and obligations that spring from them.

We have already seen that even the naturally revealed truths, which would but with difficulty come to the notice of all men, may have been supernaturally revealed, i. e., through God's supernatural intervention; for if man was created for a particular destiny, be it only a natural one, God must wish that all men of whatever condition, should arrive at a knowledge, not only of that destiny itself, but of all the requisites and conditions to reach it, and therefore we may expect that He would reveal in a supernatural manner not only supernatural truths, the knowledge of which cannot be naturally acquired, but also the natural truths which man could acquire only with great difficulty and after long efforts. (Cf. Wilmer's Handbook).

It is undeniable that God can reveal supernatural truths, and even truths we cannot understand after they have been revealed, which we call mysteries; for no sane man will deny that God knows many things of which we are ignorant, and as we are the work of His hands, He can communicate to us the knowledge of their existence, even if they are mysteries which wholly surpass our understanding. Man learns the existence of causes from their effects, although he may not comprehend the nature of either. Not to mention the world of spirits, how many material things are there whose existence we know but of whose nature we are unaware, e. g., electricity! But deists contend that even if it be admitted that God can reveal the existence of mysteries, He cannot impose upon man the acceptance of them, for man is not obliged to accept as truths what his intellect cannot grasp. What vanity and nonsense in that blasphemous thought! Is our intellect then supreme, and is it not bound to submit to the infinite wisdom and veracity of God? Deists demand that their fellow-men accept the force of their arguments in favor of their system, but they themselves prefer doubt and ignorance to knowledge and truth, when God sees fit to curtail their freedom of thought.

Since we are about to prove that God did reveal to man in a supernatural manner, and that at divers times, many truths regarding his destiny and the means to attain it, what are the criteria and standards by which we may judge that a revelation comes from God? They are: 1, interior evidence regarding the truths purporting to be revealed; 2, miracles; and 3, prophecies.

Remark. We do not mean to include in this study private revelations, or revelations made to private individuals, for their particular benefit or guidance, but only such revelations which were intended by God for all or for a large number of people.

1. All revelation must be worthy of God and if anything in it is evidently opposed to reason, or against sound morality, or against God's attributes, the revelation cannot be genuine.

Likewise if a revelation contains anything contrary to a revelation already clearly proved as genuine, the new revelation cannot have God for Author, for God cannot contradict Himself.

God may permit what at another time he had forbidden, provided it be not essentially evil; for as it depends on the free will of God, there is no contradiction; but God cannot countenance what is essentially evil, e. g., lying.

Although everything found in an alleged revelation may be true and worthy of God, that in itself is not an absolute proof of a divine revelation, for its contents may have been obtained from other sources; nevertheless the sum total of the revealed truths may constitute a convincing proof, if it be undeniable that the truths bear evident signs of coming from God but require additional proofs of the genuineness of the revelation itself. This additional proof is found in miracles and prophecies. "If anyone asserts," says the Vatican Council, "that miracles are impossible, and that, consequently all records of them, although contained in Holy Writ, are to be considered as fables or myths, or that miracles can never be known with certainty, and that the divine origin of the Christian religion cannot be properly demonstrated by them, let him be anathema." (Vatican Council, de Fide III, Can. 4).

"If anyone says that divine revelation cannot be made credible by external signs, and, therefore, that men must be moved to faith only by inward experience, or by the private experience of each one in particular; let him be anathema." (Ibid., Can. 3) .

2. Miracles, a standard for determining the falsity or the truth of revelation. If God sends a messenger on a mission to make His will known, or to teach His people a doctrine of faith and morals, credentials must be given him. There can be no stronger credentials than the power of working miracles wrought for the purpose of proving the messenger's mission or in attestation of the truth made known by him. Miracles furnish the most convincing proof of divine revelation. They are the safest and surest evidence for all, learned and unlearned.

By miracles we understand supernatural works which suspend or set aside the ordinary laws of nature, e. g., the raising of the dead to life. God alone can work miracles and confer the same power on His rational creatures. If he allows the evil spirits to do wonderful things or even to perform miracles, and the unaware are thereby deceived, He will never allow God-fearing people to be deluded, for He will always find a way to convince by greater miracles that it is He Who speaks through His messenger. He will not allow error to triumph. The magicians who imitated the miracles of Moses did wonderful things, but greater miracles defeated the malice of the evil spirits to their greater confusion and shame.

3. Prophecies, or the foretelling of events depending on the free-will of God or of man, and not on natural causes, are convincing proofs of a divine mission after the events foretold have been verified. God alone knows the future, if it is contingent upon His own free choice or upon the free-will of His intelligent creatures, and hence the fact that messengers are endowed with the knowledge of future events, which no man can acquire in a natural manner, prove that God's power dwells in them. When those who justly lay claim to a divine mission, foretell events far distant, God has been wont to endow them with the gift of miracles; or they foretold likewise events near at hand, but equally prophetical, in order that the people convinced by the verification of the latter, might likewise be confirmed in their belief of events to happen in the distant future. We shall see this test verified in the promise of a Redeemer, centuries before His advent.

Miracles and prophecies are evidences of a divine mission.

God cannot deceive nor be deceived; but God would be the direct cause of deceiving His children on earth, if He gave the power of working miracles and of prophesying to an impostor, who appealed to that divine power as an evidence of his mission. God alone can perform miracles, and God alone knows the future contingent upon His own will and upon the free-will of his rational creatures. Hence to endow a man with that divine power with a view to upholding a falsehood or some assertion from which fraud or deception would naturally result, would be direct co-operation in an imposture, which we cannot even suspect without blasphemy against the infinitely holy God.

Before proving the truth of a divine revelation, or rather of a succession of revelations, culminating in the Christian revelation, by the evidence of the miracles and prophecies which we find recorded in Holy Scripture, we shall first examine the authority and the genuineness of the books containing both.

The primitive revelation as recorded in the Pentateuch of Moses.

We will consider the Pentateuch only as a historical book, deserving human assent and belief, and not as an inspired writing. Pentateuch, a word of Greek derivation, means five books which are: Genesis, containing a succinct narrative of the creation of the world and its history until Joseph's death in Egypt; Exodus, i. e., exit, or a historical record of the deliverance of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt under the leadership of Moses; Leviticus, which contains the code of precepts and ordinances, principally adapted to the use of priests and levites; Numbers, so called because it contains the census of the people;

and Deuteronomy, a repetition of the law, as its Greek name indicates. The subject-matter as given for each book is not strictly upheld everywhere, to the exclusion of other matter: thus, history and law are mixed throughout the Pentateuch.

Moses is the author of the Pentateuch. This is proved: 1st: By the constant and uninterrupted testimony of the Jewish people. The books are in the nature of public documents, containing the laws which governed the people in civil as well as in religious matters. They contain the annals or chronicles of the race during its birth as a nation, and they were known to all, as they were frequently read in public gatherings; and, therefore, there was no possible room for mistake among the Jewish people about the authorship of the book.

2nd. Moses himself frequently mentions that he is the author. Thus we find that God Himself commanded Moses to write in a book the defeat of Amalec and his people, and to deliver it to the ears of Josue (Exod. xvii. 14); again, "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord" (Ibid. xxiv, 4); therefore "taking the book of the covenant, he (Moses) read it to the people" (Ibid. 7).

After Moses had been forty days with the Lord on Sinai, the Lord said to Moses: "Write thou these words by which I have made a convenant with thee and with Israel" (Ibid. xxxiv. 27). In Numbers (xxxiii. 2), Moses is said to have written down the different journeys and the places where the Israelites camped. "Moses wrote this law and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi." (Deut. xxxi. 9). "After Moses wrote the words of this law in a volume and finished it, he commanded the Levites . . . saying . . .: Take this book and put it in the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God" (Deut. xxxi. 24-26).

3rd. Subsequent sacred writers refer to Moses as the author of the Pentateuch: Josue (i. 7, 8; xxiii. 3, 16; xxiv. 26; 1 Kings, ii. 3; and 2 Kings, xiv. 6; 2 Paral. xxxiv. 14).

4th. The intrinsic evidence proves Moses to be the author; for the minute details of the historical facts, as well as the exactness in the laws and ceremonies, point to Moses as the author. No one except an eyewitness could have described so accurately the customs of the Egyptians and of the Jews.

5th. Even among the Gentiles, Moses is spoken of as the great legislator. Among them, Tacitus and Juvenal, and even the enemies of the Christian name and of the Jews, admit it as an indisputable fact, e. g., Celsus and Porphyrius.

The books of Moses are not only genuine, but they remained entire without substantial alteration; for the Jews could not falsify books held in such high esteem, nor could it have been done without being detected by them. They were books frequently read in private circles and in public gatherings, com-

mented on, explained and consulted by the doctors of the law, and largely quoted by subsequent writers: in fact, these books entered into the very public and private life of the Hebrews.

Alterations were not made before the separation of the kingdom of Israel from that of Juda, for all the facts related in the Pentateuch were still fresh in the minds of the immediate descendants of those who were eye-witnesses of all that happened during Moses' lifetime, and fathers communicated to their children with a justified pride the wonders which God had wrought for His chosen people. After the secession of the kingdom of Israel, the Pentateuch could not have undergone any alteration as the Jews and Samaritans were enemies, and no alteration could have been made, except with the connivance of priests, scribes and people of both the Jewish and Israelitic nation, which is not to be thought of. The Samaritans even to our day regard the Pentateuch as the only Sacred Book of divine origin, and reject all the other Books of the Old Testament.

The Jews were from an early date, and especially after the captivity of Babylon, dispersed all over the globe, yet it has never been heard that complaints were made regarding the integrity of the Pentateuch. The little discrepancies in the texts of the different codices of the Bible, in use all over the world, must be attributed to the carelessness or ignorance of the copyists, but they do not affect the substance of the text.

About three hundred years before the Christian era, the whole of the Old Testament was translated into Greek. This work, attributed to seventy interpreters who were brought from Jerusalem to Alexandria in Egypt to make the version from the Hebrew into the Greek language, convinces those who are acquainted with both languages, that the Old Testament has not undergone any substantial change; and it is evident likewise, from the many translations made in the second century into more modern languages, that no serious alteration can since have been made in the Pentateuch.

The veracity of Moses cannot seriously be disputed; he writes what he has seen with his own eyes, and as to what he relates about things that occurred before his day, if unbelievers do not admit that he learned them by direct revelation from God, he undoubtedly could easily have come to their knowledge through monuments, through tradition or documents still existing in his time, for such extraordinary occurrences must have been known to nearly all the people because of the great longevity of the Patriarchs. Moses himself was separated from Adam and Eve by only a few generations. It is not difficult to imagine among Adam's descendants several Patriarchs who were acquainted with both Adam and Noah, and two generations would connect Moses with the sons of Noah. Therefore

traditions regarding the most important events of the birth of the world, must have taught Moses and his contemporaries all that he consigned to writing. Besides, Moses had a divine mission, of which he gave abundant proof, and God could not have allowed any error in his statements regarding the revelations he was sent to communicate to the Hebrews.

The miracles wrought by Moses prove his divine mission.

Moses in his Pentateuch relates many occurrences in which he was the principal actor, and as they surpass the combined power of man and nature, he proved himself thus to be God's agent. Such were the ten plagues: Aaron the brother and prophet of Moses, threw his rod down before Pharaoh and it was changed into a serpent, and when the Egyptian magicians imitated the miracle, Aaron's rod devoured their rod. (Exod. vii. 9-12). Moses and Aaron turned all the waters of Egypt into blood. (Ibid. 19 sq.). By God's order they caused such an abundance of frogs to appear that they filled every part of the Egyptian houses (Ibid. viii. 6), but at the prayer of Moses they all departed. (Ibid. 13). Aaron by Moses' order struck the dust of the earth and sciniphs came forth in vast swarms and covered men and beasts: the magicians could not imitate this plague (Ibid. 17, 18). The fifth plague was that of murrain among cattle, horses, asses and camels, but whilst the beasts of the Egyptians died, those of the Hebrews were not harmed (Ibid. ix. 3, sq.); the sixth was the plague of boils on men and beasts, and it afflicted also the magicians (Ibid. 10, 11); then followed the plagues of hail, of locusts and of darkness, but they only hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he refused to let the Jewish people go forth. Finally, the first-born of the Egyptians, whether among beasts or men, where slain; but the Jewish homes were protected from harm by the blood of the paschal lamb sprinkled on the transoms of their doors. The Israelites set forth on their journey (Ibid. xii. 3-51); but Pharaoh changed his mind after allowing them to depart, and overtook them with his army at the Red Sea. Thereupon, the children of Israel feared exceedingly and murmured against Moses, and the man of God spoke: "Fear not: stand and see the great wonders of the Lord, which He shall do to-day, for the Egyptians whom you see now, you shall see no more forever." (Ibid. xiv. 13). The prophecy was immediately fufilled. Moses by God's command stretched forth his rod over the sea and the waters being divided, stood like a huge wall on the right and left of the Israelites, who went into the midst of the dried-up sea. (Ibid. xiv. 22, 23). The Egyptian army followed, but when Moses stretched forth again his hand over the sea, the waters came together and engulfed the mighty Egyptian host. More miracles followed. The people murmured because they had no meat and no water. Moses

prayed and a multitude of quails fell near their tents; and as Moses had foretold, God fed the people with manna from heaven during all the time they remained in the wilderness. (Ibid. ch. xvi). Moses struck the rock and water issued therefrom. (Ibid. ch. xvii).

Not less miraculous were the events that accompanied the promulgation of the Law, in which Moses took so prominent a part: from the midst of thunder and lightning God spoke to Moses and all God's commands regarding the civil and ecclesiastical polity of the nation were communicated through him to the people. He was the divinely appointed expounder of the whole Law, and all his judgments were approved by God. Can we doubt for a moment that a man so privileged was God's oracle, and that all he wrote from the beginning to the end is stamped with God's approval? To think otherwise would be to assert that God could invest His servants with divine authority and power to lead into error, not only a whole people, but many generations to come.

To the miracles wrought by Moses, must be added the many prophecies recorded by him, and made by God long before Moses' time. Such were the promises made by God through Abraham regarding the Promised Land, Canaan, to be given to his posterity (Gen. xv. 5), the four hundred years of slavery in Egypt (Ibid. xv. 13), the subsequent delivery (Ibid. 14), and the return to the Promised Land after four generations. (Ib. 16).

All these prophecies, of which some were fulfilled in Moses' time and others after his death, must have been known to Abraham's descendants, but Moses was the principal agent of God in the fulfillment of the former. He himself foretells many events which could not have been foreseen by any human ingenuity: such as the passage through the Red Sea (Exod. xiv. 13), the death of Core, Dathan and Abiron (Ibid. xvi. 6), and the fact that none who had murmured against God would behold the Promised Land. (Num. xiv. 26). He also foretold that the Israelites would ask a king to be given them, and he defines his duties four centuries before the event. (Deut. xiv. 14, sq.).

Therefore, the revelations regarding the creation, man's destiny, the sin of Adam and Eve, and the promises concerning the Messiah, which Moses recorded in his Pentateuch, had God for Author, and He undoubtedly exacts an implicit belief in them.

The historical books of the Old Testament which follow the Pentateuch, viz., Josue, Judges, Ruth, the four Books of Kings and their supplement, called by the Jews "Chronicles," and by the Septuagint Interpreters Paralipomenon, are not without great importance in bringing out more clearly the revelations made by God to Moses by confirming the authority of the books of the great legislator and his divine mission; still,

for the present we omit them, as well as several other biographies, although they prove without doubt the providence of God in all human events and especially His solicitude for His chosen people, the descendants of Abraham. This omission is justified, because they do not contain any additional revelation regarding the Messiah, promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and foretold anew by Moses, the great prophet and legislator.

The Psalms are replete with allusions to the Redeemer, to His life and to the spread of the Church which has to take the place of the Synagogue; and although the Jews and Gentiles denied that they are applicable to Christ, Christians rightly assert that many passages and even whole Psalms cannot be explained except with reference to the life and doctrine of the Redeemer, Who also openly declared that David spoke of Him.

After the Psalms follow the didactic books of the Old Testament, viz., the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, the Book of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus; they teach many important moral and dogmatic truths, but they have no direct reference to the primitive and subsequent revelations, the Mosaic and Christian revelations.

We come finally to the Prophets, and as their name indicates, many things in their writings relate to future events, revealed to man by God in view of some great object to be attained, and not, as we may well presume, to satisfy man's curiosity or to furnish him diversion.

The sixteen prophets are divided, according to the importance of the subjects treated by them, into four Major and twelve Minor Prophets. The greatest number of them wrote to warn the people of impending punishments for their crimes from an avenging God; but we find also among them several who clearly foretold important truths relating to the Redeemer to come, and to the Christian Religion which was to supplant the Jewish dispensation.

The Prophets. Genuineness of the Prophetical Books.

A book is genuine, if it can be proved that the author whose name is prefixed to the book really wrote it. A book is also genuine though the author be unknown, if it was written about a certain determined time; for it is evident that if a book is of unknown authorship, it is not to be rejected solely on that account: a man may write under a pseudonym, and still his works may be received by all his contemporaries and by subsequent generations as authoritative.

The genuineness of the prophetical books is proved, (a) by the constant tradition of the Jewish people from the time the books came to light; and the force of that argument is strengthened by the fact that the Christians used those books to prove the Christian revelations, although they were composed by the

enemies of the Christian name, long before the events foretold therein had happened. (b) By the intrinsical evidence of authenticity found in the books themselves, for the names of the authors are prefixed to the books, and in most cases the time of their production is definitely fixed by mentioning the kings of Juda or Israel under whom the revelation took place. The style of the writing is proper to a divinely inspired writer, and the facts related in the books agree with the customs and authentic history of the time. If we should attribute to the Prophets an inclination to spread among the people doubtful prophecies, we are confronted with the severity of the law, which commanded "that the prophet or forger of dreams shall be slain." (Deut. xiii. 5).

2. The integrity of the prophetic books is fully established by all the arguments adduced to prove the integrity of the Pentateuch.

3. The prophecies of which there is question, are of two classes: those that refer to events to happen in the near future, and those concerning far distant events. The former, once fulfilled, necessarily convinced the Jews that the latter also would come true, and both classes of prophecies were direct proofs that the covenant made by God with the Israelites through Moses, was still in full vigor and force, and that the Jewish religion and its sacrifices, its laws and observances together with their sanctions, were still acceptable to God, although the time was not far distant when the Jewish people would cease to be God's people of predilection.

4. The principal events, announced by the Prophets, which were fulfilled soon after being foretold, were: the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, i. e., of the ten tribes, prophesied by Osee (Ch. ix) and Amos (Ch. v) among the Israelites, forty years before the time of its fulfillment; Jeremias foretold the destruction of Jerusalem with the terrible punishments that would accompany it and the captivity of Babylon under Nabuchodonosor (Jer. xx. 4; xxi. 7, sq.); Isaias named Cyrus as the deliverer of Jerusalem and foretold that the holy city and its temple were to be rebuilt (Isaias xliv. 26 sq.; xlv. 1, sq.); Daniel centuries ahead foretold the final destruction of Jerusalem and the perpetual desolation to follow. (Dan. ix. 24). The siege and destruction of Jerusalem under Titus and Vespasian, about forty years after Christ's Ascension, and the dispersion of the Jewish people over the face of the globe, without a nation and a sacrifice, prove that the prophecy was fulfilled to the letter.

Protocanonical and Deuterocanonical Books of the Old and New Testament.

Catholics have several books in their Bible which the Jews and most Protestants do not recognize as sacred. This discrep-

ancy may date, as far as the Old Testament goes, from the Babylonian captivity, when Esdras received permission to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem. (Esdras i). This holy priest was especially instrumental in collecting together all the Sacred Writings still in existence, so much esteemed and venerated by the Jews. The Books collected together by Esdras have been called Protocanonical Books, to distinguish them from the Deuterocanonical Books, or those books of the Old Testament which the Catholic Church considers as inspired writings, and which, though a part of the Canon of the Septuagint, made by order of the king of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 280 years before Christ, were not in Esdras' Canon. We will not attempt an explanation why Esdras did not find all the books of the Old Testament. His collection was made about 480 years B. C., i. e., 200 years before the Greek version of the Septuagint was made; but Esdras was occupied with the restoration of the Jewish worship and the building of the Temple, and probably had not at his disposal the means of an Egyptian king or the advantage of an immense library, like that of Alexandria, containing, it is said, 300,000 volumes. The Sacred Books of the Old Testament, now accepted as Canonical, which were not in the collection of Esdras are: Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch with the Epistle of Jeremias, some fragments of the Book of Esther and of the Book of Daniel, and the First and Second Book of the Machabees. The last-named Books could not be in the collection of Esdras, nor in the original texts of the Septuagint, for the last events related in the history of the Machabees happened about 133 years B. C.

As the Jews and the Protestants in general reject the Deuterocanonical Books of the Old Testament, and the latter erroneously call them apocryphal, we shall refrain from including them among the sacred books in the following exposition.

All the historical books of the Old Testament merit at least historical authority, for they are genuine, entire and truthful.

1. The Jewish people have always accepted those books as authentic, and as accurate as to the facts related in them. The author's names are prefixed to most of them, and although some of the authors may not be known with certainty, nevertheless, from the time in which the books appeared, they received the full recognition of contemporary and subsequent generations.

2. Substantial alterations in the originals would have been impossible on account of the esteem and veneration in which the books were held, and since the events related in them agreed with the historical facts known through other sources, no alterations could have been made without exciting opposition and without merited reproof. Besides, if the Jews had expurgated their Sacred Books, they would have done so by leaving out

things odious to themselves and detrimental to the honor of the nation, and by substituting for them honorable and heroic deeds to gain for themselves and their nation the admiration of their descendants and of strangers. Again, the simple style in which the facts are related, without any attempt at ostentation, strongly favors the belief that the authors aimed above all at the truth, and this conviction grows on us, if we notice the minute details with which events are recorded. If we add to this that those books were read in public meetings, contained in large part the simple annals of the nation, and were kept in the sacred temple of Jerusalem, we should concede to them the same authority we attribute to the public documents of our country.

Thus far we have proved the authority of all the Protocanonical Books of the Old Testament. We shall now prove from those books that the Jewish religion was not to last forever, but was to be superseded by a Religion more acceptable to God, or in other words, that the Christian Revelation completed the Primitive and Mosaic Revelation through the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

THE MESSIAH

The Messiah, a Legislator and Prophet like unto Moses, was promised by Moses himself when he said: "The Lord thy God shall raise up to thee a Prophet of thy Nation and of thy brethren, like unto me: Him shalt thou hear." (Deut. xviii. 15). This promise was confirmed by God Himself: "I will," said the Lord to Moses, "raise them up a Prophet out of the midst of their brethren like to thee: and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him. And he that will not hear His words, which He shall speak in My name, I will be the revenger." (Ibid. 18, 19). The Messiah was to be a descendant of Abraham, according to God's promise: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xxii. 18). Jacob on his deathbed prophesied that Juda, his son, should sway the sceptre until He come that is to be sent, the Expectation of Nations. (Gen. xlix. 10). Isaias bids the afflicted to rejoice "for He that made thee shall rule over thee, the Lord of Hosts is His name: and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel, shall be called the God of all the earth. . . . Behold, I have given Him for witness to the people, for a Leader and a Master to the Gentiles." (Isaias xliv. 5; xlv. 4). It may not be clear to all that the last quotation refers to the Messiah, but it refers undoubtedly to a time when the Gentiles are to be called to salvation and God shall rule over all the earth. Jeremiah announces a New Covenant, different from the Covenant made by God with Moses and the Jewish people: "Behold the day shall come, saith the Lord, and I will

make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Juda. Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. . . . But this shall be the covenant . . . I will give My law in their bowels and I will write it in their hearts: and I will be their God and they shall be My people." (Jerem. li. 31, sq.).

The Jewish sacrifices are to be rejected, and the new sacrifice acceptable to God is to be established. "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord: and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For from the rising of the sun to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation: for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Mal. i. 10, 11). The sense is obvious, and the reason for the rejection of the Jewish sacrifices is given: it is a punishment because of the people's ingratitude and of the contemptible and unworthy sacrifices offered by the priests and levites. (Mal. i.).

From these and other passages of the Prophets, we learn that the belief of the Jews in the Messiah's advent was well founded, but when He did come they rejected Him; they still hope for His coming, but they shall be frustrated in their expectation.

The time of the Messiah's advent according to the prophecies is long past.

The fact is well established by Jacob's prophecy on his deathbed. Addressing Juda, he said: "Juda, thee shall thy brethren praise: thy hands shall be on the necks of thy enemies: The sons of thy father shall bow down to thee. . . . The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till He come that is to be sent, and He shall be the expectation of nations." (Gen. xlix. 8, 10). In Juda and his descendants the ruling power over all Jacob's posterity was to reside, and that power shall come to an end when the Messiah, the Expectation of Nations appears upon earth. Does the termination of Juda's rule coincide with the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, the Redeemer? At the birth of Christ, Herod, an Idumean, ruled in Jerusalem, but there was still a vestige of tribal rule left until Judea, after Herod's death, was made a Roman province, under Pilate. Even then it might be claimed that the Jews had not entirely lost the right to govern themselves, although they submitted to a foreign rule, for they still kept up the sacrifices in the temple, and the government of the country, outside of Jerusalem, was largely Jewish. But not even a shadow of religious or civil power was left in the hands of the Jews, when forty years after Christ's ascension, Jerusalem was totally destroyed and the Jews were dispersed over the

whole globe. It is true that the tribe of Juda was not invested with supreme power until the reign of King David, and that during the Babylonian captivity, there was an interval of seventy years, during which the Jewish authority seemed nearly totally obliterated; still the tribe of Juda remained of all the most influential during and after the captivity, even when the Jews resorted to a republican form of government under the Macchabees. About sixty years before Christ, the Jewish power gradually began to wane. Under Pompey the Romans, victorious over the Jews, placed Herod on the throne, and all Jewish authority ended with the final destruction of Jerusalem under the Roman Emperors Titus and Vespasian.

Daniel's prophecy determines the time when Christ is to destroy iniquity and when justice shall reign upon earth. That time coincides, according to learned chonologists, with the sacrifice of the Saviour on the Cross.

Daniel, one of the Jewish captives in Chaldea, in the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, understood from the prophecies of Jeremiah (xxv. 11; xxix. 10), that the end of the Babylonian captivity, which had lasted seventy years, was at hand, and he implored the Lord not to delay the deliverance of His people on account of their sins. (Dan. ix. 1-23). Whilst the was still praying, the Angel Gabriel flew swiftly towards him and spoke, among other things, as follows: "O Daniel, I am now come forth to teach thee, and that thou mightest understand. From the beginning of thy prayers the word came forth: And I am come to show it to thee, because thou art a man of desires: therefore do thou mark the word, and understand the vision. Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy City, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought, and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled, and the Saint of Saints may be anointed. Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build Jerusalem again, unto Christ the Prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks. All the streets shall be built again and the walls in straitness of times. And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain: and the people that shall deny Him shall not be His. And a people with their leader that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be waste and after the end of the war the appointed desolation. And He shall confirm the covenant with many, in one week: and in the half of the week the Victim and the sacrifice shall fail; and there shall be in the Temple the abomination of desolation: and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation and to the end." (Dan. ix. 22-27).

In this prophecy the seventy weeks are to be counted from

the time that the edict for the rebuilding of Jerusalem was published, and they must determine the time when Christ, the Saint of Saints is to be anointed. The seventy weeks must be weeks of days or of years, as none other are mentioned in Scripture. Seventy weeks of days or 490 days make only one year and a little over four months, and therefore there cannot be question of weeks or days, for no great event like those indicated in Daniel's prophecies, happened during the reigns of Cyrus, Darius, or Artaxerxes Longimanus, kings of the Persians. (Esdras ch. i-v; Nehem. ch. ii) who issued decrees for the rebuilding of the temple and wall of Jerusalem. (Esdras ch. i-vii; Nehem. ch. ii).

If we take the seventy weeks to be weeks of years (490 years), and the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus as the beginning of the seventy weeks, the middle of the last week coincides exactly, as many learned chronologists maintain, with the year in which our Saviour died, satisfied for the sins of the whole world, merited for us all graces and justice, and fulfilled all the prophecies: "all was consummated," and, therefore, according to the prophecy, He merited that transgression might be finished, sin and iniquity might be abolished and everlasting justice might reign instead; and also, that vision and prophecy might be fulfilled and that He, the Saint of Saints, might be anointed as the immortal Priest, Who offered Himself as a Victim on the cross and Who renews His Sacrifice every day on our altars until time is no more.

Although we cannot all understand the difficult calculations upon which chronologists base their conclusion, a limited knowledge of history must convince everyone that the time for the coming of Christ, the Messiah, is long past; for more than 2,300 years have now elapsed since the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple by Esdras and Nehemias, and nearly nineteen centuries have now rolled by since the desolation of desolations in the temple began with the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

It must also be remarked that to no one, except Jesus of Nazareth, are applicable the sublime traits and magnificent encomiums attributed to the Messiah in Daniel's prophecy, and whereas the Saviour lived upon earth within the seventy weeks of years that followed after the end of the Babylonian captivity —as the history of the Jewish people clearly proves—the prophecy undoubtedly points to the Saviour Whom the Christians recognize as the true Messiah, the Expectation of all Nations.

When the prophecy says of Christ that He shall confirm the covenant, it refers to His preaching and doctrine, to the institution of the Sacraments, to the foundation of the Church with the mission of the Apostles to preach salvation to the whole world, and finally to the great promises made by Christ to His followers: in all this the new covenant consists. Hence, since

all the figures and prophecies were fulfilled by the death of Christ, and the victims and the sacrifices in the temple of Jerusalem are forever abolished, the last event of the seventy weeks is explained and confirmed, viz., in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail. (Cf. A Lapid., in Dan.).

That the time of the Messiah's advent is long past is also proved by two other prophets: Aggeus and Malachy, who both clearly fortell that the Messiah shall visit the new temple constructed after the captivity.

Aggeus consoled the people, saddened at the sight of the new temple, when they compared it with the magnificence of the old: "Yet one little while" . . . said the Lord of Hosts, "and the desired of all nations shall come: And I will fill this house with glory; great shall be the glory of this last house more than of the first." (Aggeus ii. 8, 10).

The prophecy of Malachy also refers to the day not far off when the Lord, the Angel of the New Testament (covenant) so often foretold, and so long expected by all the Jews, shall come to the temple: "Behold I send My angel and he shall prepare the way before My face. And presently the Lord, Whom you seek and the Angel of the Testament Whom you desire shall come to His temple. Behold He cometh, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Mal. iii. 1). It is clear that the temple built under Esdras has long ceased to exist. Of the temple proper not a stone has been left upon a stone, for, although the temple of Solomon, destroyed under Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon, and the second temple, constructed under the kings of Persia, were built on the same substructure, which made a perfect level surface for both temples and which still exists, nothing remains of either temple.

Aggeus and Malachy lived about the same time, although Malachy is posterior to the former and is considered the last of the prophets. A little more than 400 years elapsed between the prophecy of Malachy and the beginning of Christ's public life.

The prophecies just quoted can refer only to the Saviour; not only because shortly after those prophecies were made, the temple ceased to exist, but also because the presence of no other personage could have given lustre and glory to a sacred temple. It is well known that the Messiah was expected to come about the time Jesus of Nazareth appeared, for the people who went to hear St. John the Baptist, suspected him to be the Christ (Luke iii. 15), and the Samaritan woman attests the universal expectation of the Messiah, when she said to the Saviour: "I know that the Messiah cometh (Who is called Christ); therefore when He is come, He will tell us all things." (John iv. 25) and to the people of Sichar she said: "Come, and see a man who has told me all things whatsoever I have done.

Is He not the Christ?" (Ibid. 29). Finally the historians of the time in which the Saviour lived, Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius, assert that the Jews believed the Messiah's advent to be near at hand. From all this what shall we conclude, but that Jesus our Saviour is the Messiah, the Angel of the Testament, Who by coming into the temple honored it by His presence and gave it a glory and a lustre, which the magnificent temple of Solomon did not possess?

Other prophecies regarding the Messiah fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.

The following prophecies regard the birth, the life, doctrine, death and glory of the Messiah. Taken together, they could not be uttered of anyone other than Christ, our Saviour.

Isaias relates that, when Jerusalem was besieged during the reign of Achaz, King of Juda, by the armies of the kings of Israel and Syria, he was sent by God to King Achaz to tell him not to fear. He offers a miracle to reassure the king, who refuses the offer on the plea that he did not wish to tempt the Lord. Then Isaias said: "Hear ye therefore, O House of David, . . . the Lord Himself shall give you a sign. Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son and His name shall be called Emmanuel. He shall eat butter and honey, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the god." (Is. vii. 13-15). This prophecy can apply only to Jesus, the Saviour, born of a Virgin mother.

Micheas foretells the place of Christ's nativity: "And thou Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda; out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be the Ruler of Israel and His going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity." (Mich. v. 2). The chief priests and scribes assembled by Herod to ascertain the place of Christ's nativity, declared that this prophecy referred to Him and that He was to be born in Bethlehem. (Matt. ii. 4-6). We learn also from St. John (vii. 42), that the common belief was that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem. His birth of the Father from all eternity, mentioned by the Prophet, forbids us to apply the prophecy to anyone else but Jesus, the eternal Son of God.

The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is thus described by Zachary: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold thy King will come to thee, the Just and Saviour: He is poor, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." (Zach. ix. 9). We learn from St. Matthew (xxi. 1-7), that this prophecy was fulfilled on the day of our Saviour's triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

The following extracts from the Prophets can refer to none other than to our Saviour:

Isaias (ch. 53) describes the Passion of our Saviour; the most salient passages are the following: "Despised and the most abject of men: A man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity. . . . Surely He has borne our iniquities and carried our sorrow; and we thought Him as it were a leper and as one struck by God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins: . . . and by His bruises we were healed. He was offered because it was His own will and He opened not His mouth: He shall be led like a sheep to the slaughter. . . . He was reputed with the wicked, etc." — "I have given My body to the strikers and My cheek to them that plucked them: I have not turned away My face from them that rebuked Me and spit upon Me." (Isaias l. 6).

The Psalms of David are replete with allusions to the Messiah. Psalm cix about the power of Christ Who makes His enemies His footstool, about His priesthood and His eternal birth of the Father, is unintelligible unless applied to Jesus of Nazareth. The following passages also refer to Him: "Why have the Gentiles raged and the people devised vain thoughts? The kings of the earth stood up and the princes met together against the Lord and against His Christ." (Ps. ii. 1, 2). "O God, my God, look upon Me: why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Is. xxi. 1). "But I am a worm and no man. . . . They have spoken with the lips and wagged the head. He hoped in the Lord, let Him deliver Him." (Ibid. 7, 9). "They have dug My hands and feet. They have numbered all My bones." (Ibid. 17, 18). "They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture they cast lots." (Ibid. 19). On the resurrection of Christ the Psalmist says: "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; nor wilt Thou give Thy Holy One to see corruption." (Ps. xv. 10).

CHRISTIAN REVELATION

Authenticiy of the Books of the New Testament

We exclude from our consideration of the books of the New Testament, the Deuterocanonicals, not because they are inferior in authority, for Catholics attach to them the same divine inspiration, but because our fight is mainly with deists and rationalists and other infidels, and not against those who believe with us in the divinity of the Christian Religion.

Thus, for the present, we exclude from the Books of the New Testament, the following: St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of St. James, the Second Epistle of St. Peter, the Second and Third Epistles of St. John, the Epistle of St. Jude and the Apocalypse; also fragments of the following Gospels: of St. Mark xvi. 9-20, of St. Luke xxii. 43, 44, and of

St. John vii. 53; viii. 11. These fragments and the Epistles just named were not considered genuine in all the churches of Christendom, during the first centuries of the Christian era; and although they were later held as equally authentic throughout the whole Church, nevertheless, in order to distinguish them from those that were received at all times as inspired writings in all the churches throughout Christendom, they are called Deuterocanonical, (second canonical).

The Council of Trent as well as the Council of Florence attribute to both Protocanonical and Deuterocanonical Books the same divine inspiration, and they therefore enjoy the same authority.

All the books of the New Testament, comprising the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the didactic Epistles of the Apostles, are authentic in the strict sense of the word. Each book has the name of its author prefixed to it, and was written by him or by his authority. This is proved (a) by the constant tradition from apostolic times to our own day. Had these books lacked authenticity, they like many another spurious work would have soon been rejected. (Cf. Luke i. 1). The early apostolic writers, like St. Clement of Rome, St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp, cite many passages from them without naming the authors, either because they were well known, or because the custom had not been introduced to name the authors, when citing texts of Holy Scripture. St. Justin, who lived in the middle of the second century, tells us in one of his Apologies, that it was customary to read the Apostles' documents or monuments, as he calls the Holy Scriptures, in the public gatherings of the faithful. We know from many sources that this custom prevailed everywhere in the beginning of the third century, although all the churches may not have had a complete set of all the books of the New Testament. St. Ireneus mentions in his writings the Four Gospels and several of the Epistles of St. Paul. Tertullian asserts that the churches of Corinth, of Thessaly, of Ephesus and of Rome, were in possession of the Epistles of St. Paul. The fragment found by Muratori and Hermas' **Pastor** of the middle of the second century, both indicate that the Roman Church possessed the books of the New Testament, as the books are therein named with the sacred writers, except that the Muratorian fragment begins only with the Third Gospel.

(b) The authenticity of the New Testament is also proved by internal evidence. The sacred authors of the New Testament assure us, by the details they give, that they were cognizant of the facts related by them, and if they were not always eye-witnesses, they received their knowledge from those that were. Their writings, filled with Hebraisms, denote that the writers were of Jewish nationality, and the simplicity of the

style, without bombast or ostentation, proves their sincerity. The character of each writer corresponds to his style, e. g., the lively faith and authority of St. Peter, the zeal and determination of St. Paul, the meekness and the ardent love of God and neighbor, of St. John, shine forth in their respective writings, whilst St. Paul proves himself in all his Epistles a careful student of the Old Law, and better versed in the Greek language than any other of the sacred writers, who betray a less studied mind in all that appertains to literature and elegant diction.

(c) The authenticity of the New Testament is also proved by the enemies of the Christian name, like Celsus, Porphyrius, and Julian the Apostate, who, by not attacking or denying it, virtually admit it; and, finally, this authenticity is vindicated by the Fathers of the Church, who defended it against the heretics of their times.

Integrity of the Books of the New Testament

The autograph manuscripts of the writers of the New Testament are indeed lost, as we may well conjecture, but from what has been said already, we must conclude that apograph transcripts were in the possession of many Christian churches, as early as the beginning of the second century. The judicious care which made the early Church reject all apocryphal books, is a guarantee that the canonical books were not admitted as sacred without serious discernment. Likewise, the translations made of all the books of the New Testament in the second and third centuries, made it impossible to falsify the sacred writings at a later day. The many variations in the ancient codices now extant, in matters that do not affect the substance, and which may be attributed to the unskillfulness or carelessness of the copyists, prove conclusively that the original texts have come down to us entire and uncorrupted. The most ancient and important codices, now in existence, are: the Vatican Codex, one of the oldest and of all the most important, containing both Old and New Testaments; it dates from the fourth century; the Codex of St. Ephraim, in the Paris Library, a palimpsest, containing both Testaments nearly entire, and indeed ancient. The last writing over the original contained a portion of St. Ephraim's works. It probably dates from the fifth century. The Codex of Alexandria, now in the British Library has both Testaments nearly complete. It dates from the fifth century. The very ancient Sinaitic Codex, in the library of Petrograd, was originally found in a monastery of Mount Sinai. It contains the whole of the New Testament with an Epistle of St. Barnabas and the First Book of the **Pastor.** In the seventh century it was retouched, as age had faded the ink. It is assigned to the fourth century. The Codices of Cantabria and Claremont: the first containing the Gospels and the Acts,

and the latter, the Epistles of St. Paul, date from the sixth century, if not from the fifth. Since the contents of these codices and of others of a later date—of which there are more than a hundred anterior to the tenth century—agree all in substance, the little discrepancies only bring out the greater certainty that the books of the New Testament came to us entire and without substantial alterations.

Veracity of the Writers

The authors of the books of the New Testament had no pet theory to divulge, like the heretics, but set out to propagate the doctrine of their Master, and this they did in a simple and unostentatious manner. They had not learned the ways of deceivers, nor could they have any temporal advantage in view. What could they expect but ridicule, contempt, stripes and prisons, if not a death as cruel as their Master's, Whose doctrine they preached? It was the Divine Spirit that moved them to despise the obstacles in their way. If they intended to deceive, how hopeless their task! They disseminated their doctrine first among the Jews, who like themselves were witnesses of the facts or could easily ascertain their falsehood. How could men, mostly uneducated, agree among themselves to relate the same accounts concerning the same doctrine, life, passion, death, resurrection and ascension of the Saviour, if the historical facts were not true? How could they hope to be successful in their deceit? Their success in making whole nations believe the doctrine they taught, is a proof of their sincerity, since those who gave credence to their teaching and writings could only be brought to accept the facts related by them after due examination.

The miracles and prophecies of Christ demonstrate his divinity and prove the Christian religion to be divine.

1. Christ's miracles are too well known to detain us long. They were wrought before the eyes of multitudes in many parts of Palestine during the three years of His public life, beginning with the miracle of Cana in Galilee, and continuing until He, crying out with a loud voice, which converted the centurion, gave up the ghost, when the veil of the temple was rent, the earth quaked and the graves were opened. (Matt. xxvii. 50-54). He cured every kind of ailment, according as He willed even although absent, so that to those who were sent by St. John the Baptist to ascertain if He was the one Who was to come or if they had to look for another, He could truly say: "Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen; the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again." (Matt. xi. 4, 5). The evil spirits, as well as the elements, obeyed Him. The son of the widow of Naim, whilst being carried to the grave, became alive at the touch of

His hand. Lazarus, dead four days, rose at His command from the sepulchre, a miracle so evident and so well known to all that the Pharisees, unable to deny it and seeing the impression it made on the people, resolved to compass His death.

We should not overlook the reason why the Saviour wrought so many miracles: He was undoubtedly moved with compassion for the many sufferers who implored His help, and He wished also to inculcate the efficacy of prayer; but He Himself has given us the main object of His miracles: it was to prove that He was the Son of God and that His mission upon earth was divine: "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not," He said to His hearers, "but if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works: That you may know that the Father is in Me and I in the Father." (John x. 37, 38).

The resurrection of Christ is the greatest and most evident proof of His divinity.

Christ Himself, when foretelling His resurrection, made it the most convincing ground of our faith, and it is of itself all-sufficient to confirm His followers in the belief of His divine mission. When the Scribes and Pharisees asked a sign of the Saviour, He answered, saying: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign; and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the Prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth, three days and three nights." (Matt. xii. 39, 40).

In the body of the catechism we have given the proofs of Christ's death and resurrection (No. 88), and, therefore, we need not repeat them here. Let us simply remark that the truth of the resurrection contributed more than any other miracle to the conversion of the Jews, and afterwards of the Gentiles, for "if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain," says the Apostle, "and your faith is also vain." (1 Cor. xv. 14). The miracles wrought by the Apostles as a proof of their divine mission, confirm again the proof of Christ's resurrection.

2. **The miracles of the Apostles also prove that their mission was from God, and that the religion they preached is divine.**

Christ our Saviour had promised that those who believe in Him would work many wonders: "And these signs shall follow those that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents, and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: They shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover. . . . But they going forth preached everywhere: The Lord working withal and confirming the word with signs that followed." Mark xvi. 17, sq.). These last words show us that God performed many miracles to confirm the doctrine of the Apostles,

according to the promise of the Saviour: "He that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he shall also do; and greater than these shall he do." (John xiv. 12). Therefore we should not wonder at the miracles recorded in the Acts, such as the cure of the sick who were brought into the streets, so that Peter's shadow might fall on them, and the cure of those who were troubled with unclean spirits (Acts v. 15, 16); Philip's miracles in Samaria, in curing the lame and those taken with the palsy (Ibid. ix. 34); the healing of a lame man (Acts iii. 6); the punishing of Ananias and Saphira (Ibid. v. 1-10); the healing of Eneas of the palsy (Ibid. ix. 34); the unclean spirits who went out crying aloud and the raising to life of Tabitha (Ibid. 40). Chapter the twentieth of the Acts deals with St. Paul's stay in Troas, and in it is incidentally related how St. Paul brought Eutychus back to life. St. Paul also foretells the loss of a ship and the safety of all passengers. St. Luke omits the mention of many other miracles, simply asserting that "God wrought by the hand of Paul more than common miracles." (Ibid. xxxix. 12). We have no first-hand records from eye-witnesses of the ministerial labors of the other Apostles, but the short sketches we have of St. Peter's and St. Paul's doings, and of the rapid spread of the Christian religion, prove the saying of the Saviour: "He that believeth in Me, the works that I do he shall also do; and greater than these shall he do."

The conversion of the civilized world to the Christian Religion without the help of miracles, is inexplainable, if the means employed, and the opposition of the pagan world with its mighty rulers, as well as the natural passions of men, are taken into consideration. As St. Augustine well remarks: to affirm that the conquest of the world by followers of the crucified Jesus, was gained without miracles, is to admit the greatest of all miracles.

3. **The Prophecies of our Lord.**

These prophecies are many: some regard Himself and depend on the free will of God or on the free will of man, such as those concerning the betrayal of Judas, the denial of Peter, and his conversion followed by his confirming his brethren in the faith, Christ's own passion, death and resurrection with many circumstances relating to His passion. Others regard future events which no human sagacity could foresee, Thus Christ foretells that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church, which He founded on the rock, Peter. He promises that He will until the consummation of the world, be with His Apostles, who shall continue in their successors to preach the truths of the Gospel; He prophesies that the piety of the woman, who anointed His feet, shall be praised throughout the world, and He more than once predicted the sad fate of Jerusalem, describing its final destruction with such circumstances

that His prophecies seem to be a historical record of contemporary events. (Cf. Peronne, S.J.).

The doctrine of Christ considered in itself, proclaims its divine origin.

The intrinsic evidence of Christianity is unimpeachable: the whole doctrine of the Saviour attests its heavenly origin. What can there be more sublime than its morality? If it were observed throughout the world, this world would be transformed into a terrestrial paradise. "Love God above all things and thy neighbor as thyself," lo! the fundamental doctrine of Christian morality! How sublime in its simplicity! Have the greatest philosophers of old conceived anything comparable to it? The Christian religion not only enunciates a fundamental truth, but applies it to all states of life: rulers and subjects, parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, rich and poor, find in it all their respective rights and duties, which operate for the welfare of society and of the individual.

As to the relation between man and his Creator, and as to his destiny upon earth and hereafter, what love, wisdom and goodness in the Supreme Being the Gospel reveals! What charity, justice and equitable mercy in the Incarnation and the Redemption! Even in the eternal punishment of the damned we must adore the decision of an infinitely just God, for no one is lost unless he wills to be lost. The Christian religion alone explains the presence of evil among so much good within us and around us, but whilst it shows that the source of all good is in God, and evil originates in the wickedness of the free will of the creature, it teaches us how to make evil co-operate for our greatest good. Although perfection is not attainable during our mortal life, the Christian revelation exhorts all to strive towards it by imitating the perfect Model, Christ the Saviour, Who came not only to teach but to show the way: "I am the Life, the Way and the Truth," He said of Himself. Thus all of man's legitimate aspirations are fostered, and they are further encouraged by the promise of an endless reward, surpassing all the joys we can conceive.

The dogmas of our Faith regarding God's nature, our destiny and the sublime mysteries of the Trinity, of the Incarnation and Redemption—although they convince us of our littleness, yea, of our nothingness—teach man his greatest dignity, owing to the love of the Supreme Majesty for him. God, so incomprehensible in His being, in His eternal wisdom, in His almighty power, in His infinite beauty and loveliness, and in one word in His infinite goodness, lives not for Himself alone. What He is and has, He desires to communicate to us. He wishes us to participate in all His perfections by making us His children and His heirs. What dignity, what happiness

awaits the humble and obedient child of the most loving and best of Fathers!

All these sublime truths the Christian Religion teaches. Let an unbiased mind compare them with the feeble efforts of the wisest philosophers of old, when they discoursed on man and his destiny, on the nature of God, on moral evil and virtue, and on the all-important matter of the relationship between the Creator and His creatures, and if that mind be free from low and disorderly affections, it can come to only one conclusion: that the Religion which solves for man all the important questions of the present and the future life, and satisfies all the lofty aspirations of man's nature, is divine in its origin, and leads man back to his source; in a word, that it comes from God and leads to God.

No one, not even among the bitterest enemies of the Christian Religion, has ever denied the exemplary life of the Saviour: He taught the most sublime truths, and His holy life corresponded with His doctrine. His most furious enemies among the Pharisees accused Him of being in league with Satan, and we know how the meek Jesus warded off that accusation by showing its absurdity: He was casting out devils, and surely Satan would be divided against himself by destroying his own power. This accusation is not renewed in our day by Christ's enemies: the Pagans and materialists have ascribed His miracles to magic art, and the rationalists to hallucination; the latter have fancied Him to be an illusionist, and, therefore, of an unbalanced mind, which is entirely in contradiction with the quiet, calm but grave and reassuring demeanor of the Saviour. He never resorted even to bitter words, except against the hypocritical Pharisees. What order and admirable connection in His teachings! What unction in His discourses, delivered not with the enthusiasm of a passionate orator, but with the sincere conviction of a judicious mind that proclaims the most elementary truths and the most sublime mysteries with the same simplicity of diction.

We should accept the rationalists' encomiums on the Saviour's heroic virtues with serious misgivings, although they are true and well merited. Coming from them, they are at best only a bait to deceive the unwary: now they extol the divine traits of the Saviour's life, and in the next breath they deny His divinity, whilst they speak of His miracles as myths, hallucinations, effects of an overheated brain, or the natural consequence of physical strain or mental exaltation.

To every sincere Christian, Christ is really and indeed what He claimed to be, the true and only Son of God the Father. Those who cannot admit that fundamental truth, must necessarily conclude that He is an impostor, a deceiver, who willingly and knowingly has led astray the largest portion of

the civilized world in a matter dearest to the heart of man, viz., man's relations to his Creator, and the eternal welfare of his soul.

Since rationalists do not accuse the Saviour of fraud or deceit, but rather extol the holiness of His life or tacitly admit it, I see no further reason to show that the whole life of the Saviour, His words and His actions exclude all possibility of imposture and deception.

The Constancy of the Martyrs. Perpetuity of the Church.

The constancy of the martyrs under the most cruel torments, and the great multitude of those who laid down their lives, rather than deny their faith in Christ's teaching, are undoubtedly incontrovertible testimonies of the truth of the Chirstian Religion: To this evidence should be added also the permanency of the Roman Catholic Church, which has subsisted nearly nineteen centuries in spite of the many enemies from within and from without, who have assailed it with a fury of which hell alone seems capable. It is evident that the only power that has maintained it in all its splendor and youthful vigor, is the power of Him, Who promised that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It belongs to Christian apologetics to develop these last proofs which set forth so clearly the divine origin of the Christian Religion.

APPENDIX II

HOLY SCRIPTURE—THE BIBLE

The Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. iii. 15) are so called because they have been inspired by the Holy Ghost, contain holy things, and sanctify men (St. Thomas). They are known also by the name of Bible, from the Greek word "biblion," a book, because they are the Book of Books, and excel all other books in eminence.

The Bible contains the Old and the New Testament. The word testament in many parts of Holy Scripture means a compact, an agreement, a covenant; and hence the expression: "The Book of the Testament." (Ex. xxiv. 7). Therefore the Old Testament contains all the books of the Old Law and all other books inspired by God, relating to the covenant made by God through Moses with the Israelites, and to the promise of the Messiah yet to come; and the New Testament contains the inspired books relating to the New Law proclaimed by Christ.

The Books, admitted in the Church as inspired, constitute the Canon (rule) of the Holy Scriptures, and thus we have the Canon of the Old and the Canon of the New Testament. Until

the Council of Florence no authoritative decision, establishing the Canon of the inspired writings, had been given, and in the absence of such a decision, there was doubt anent the divine inspiration of some of the books of both Testaments. Since the sixteenth century, it has been customary to call those books that were always and everywhere recognized as inspired, Protocanonical, and those about the inspiration of which some doubt had been entertained, but which were placed afterwards in the Canon of inspired writings, have been called Deuterocanonical.

Taking into consideration the subject-matter of the books of the Old and the New Testament, they are divided into historical ,didactic (preceptive), and prophetic books.

Old Testament. The Old Testament consists according to the decree of the Council of Trent (Sess. 4), of 42 books, counting Jeremiah, the Lamentations and Baruch as one book. Of these the following are historical: The Five Books of Moses, to wit: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, Josue, Judges, Ruth, the Four Books of Kings, the Two Books of Paralipomenon the First Book of Esdras and the Second called Nehemias, Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, the Psalter of David containing 150 psalms and Two Books of the Macchabees, the First and Second. The Psalter of David is placed also among the didactic books.

After the historical books follow the didactic books, and those classed as such are: The Psalter of David containing 150 psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus; and finally come the four major Prophets: viz., Isaias, Jeremias with Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel; and twelve Minor Prophets: viz., Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zachary, Malachy.

New Testament. In the New Testament, the arrangement is the same. It contains twenty-seven books: viz., Four Gospels, according to Sts. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; the Acts of the Apostles, written by the Evangelist Luke; fourteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul: to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two Epistles of the Apostle Peter, three of the Apostle John, one of the Apostle James, one of the Apostle Jude, and the Apocalypse of the Apostle John. The Apocalypse is the only prophetic book in the New Testament.

Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures

It is the doctrine of the Church that all the books of the Old and the New Testament enumerated in the Decree of the Council of Trent, together with all their parts as reproduced in the old Latin Vulgate edition, have God for Author (Trent, Sess. 4. On the Canon of the H. S.); and "she (the Church)

holds them as sacred and canonical, not in the sense that they have been composed by a human power and have thereafter been approved by His (God's) authority, nor solely because they contain the revelation without (admixture of) error, but because having been written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for Author, and as such they have been given to the Church." (Vat. Co.—On Faith, ch. 2). "Therefore, if anyone receive not the books of Holy Scripture entire, with all their parts, as they were enumerated in the holy Council of Trent, or deny that they are divinely inspired, let him be anathema." (Ibid. Can. 3).

The Saviour and His Apostles frequently upheld the belief of the Jews, who venerated the books of the Old Testament as coming from God. "Search the Scriptures," says our Lord, "for you think in them to have life everlasting; and the same are they that give testimony of Me." (John v. 39, sq.). Sometimes He quotes Scripture, as for instance from Psalm lxxxi. 6: "Is it not written in your Law: I said you are gods." (John x. 34; Cf. Matt. xxvi. 24, sq.; Luke xviii. 31; xxiv. 26, sq.).

The Apostle Paul refers to all the Holy Scriptures, then in use, when he says: "All Scripture inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice." (2 Tim. iii. 16).

As to the Books of the New Testament, we cannot quote, in the same manner, as for the Old, subsequent testimonies taken from Holy Scripture itself, but the inspiration of the books of the New Testament is demonstrated by Apostolic tradition, and by the decisions of an infallible Church. Such an unanimity among the Fathers of the early Church would be unexplainable unless we admit its Apostolic tradition.

When it is said that the Holy Scriptures were written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it does not mean that the Holy Ghost dictated every word, without leaving the writer any choice in expressing the truths communicated to him; although that was done undoubtedly in some particular cases as in the use of "Word" for the Son of God as employed by St. John (John i.). It is sufficient for the divine inspiration of a book, that the writer be inspired by the Holy Ghost to commit certain truths to writing and that he, obeying the inspiration, be sustained by an efficacious aid or grace of God to express in his own way the full sense of all the truths, and those only, which God had determined to be written by him. Hence God is truly said to be the Author of an inspired book and the writer His instrument; again, the whole subject-matter, i. e., the ideas and truths, whether dogmatical, moral, prophetic or even historical, are God's, but the exterior form, viz., the language, the style, the order or connections between the different thoughts, are the writer's.

Language of the Holy Scriptures

All the books of the Old Testament, except Wisdom, the Second Book of Macchabees and possibly the First, were written in Hebrew, which changed but little from the time of Moses to the end of the Babylonian captivity. The two books of Esdras and Nehemias, written after the end of the captivity show already a more frequent use of foreign words and expressions taken from the Chaldean language: but soon after the captivity, when the Jews, who had returned from Babylon, began to have frequent intercourse and relation with their northern neighbors, the Syrians, and with the Chaldeans, who had taken possession of most of the Jewish lands, especially east of the Jordan, the Hebrew tongue gradually lost its purity, and a new language was formed, the Syro-Chaldaic or Aramaic language; and this was the language spoken by the Jews at the time our Saviour lived upon earth.

The First Book of the Machabees was most probably also written in Hebrew, as St. Jerome tells us that he had seen the Hebrew text thereof; and shortly afterwards it was translated into Greek. According to the common opinion, Wisdom and the Second Book of Macchabees was written in the Greek language.

As for the books of the New Testament, the original language in which they were written was Greek, with the exception of the Gospel of St. Matthew, which was intended to confirm the Jewish converts in their faith, and therefore St. Matthew properly employed the Aramaic or Syro Chaldaic language, then spoken by the Jews in Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia.

The Reading of the Holy Scriptures

The reading of the Bible in any of the dead languages, such as Hebrew, Greek, Latin, etc., never was forbidden; but after Protestantism sprang up in the sixteenth century and Protestants taught that the Bible was the only rule of faith, and besides translated the text of Holy Scripture from the dead languages into their native tongues to suit their heretical opinions, it was at one time forbidden to read the Bible in the vernacular or living languages. The reason for the distinction is that those who could read the Scriptures in any dead language, were sufficiently instructed not to be imposed upon, and that alterations could not be attempted in the old texts without being easily detected; whilst those who can read the Bible only in their own language, are not able to compare the translation with the copies of the originals. Again, the Bible is in many parts obscure, as St. Peter remarked about the Epistles of St. Paul, "in which are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." (2 Peter iii. 16).

To obviate the danger of deception, and not wishing to deprive the faithful of the salutary knowledge to be gained by the perusal of the Holy Scriptures, Pope Benedict XIV permitted the reading of the Bible in all vernacular languages, provided the translation be approved by the Holy See or by the bishop of the place where the Bible is printed, and provided that the texts be accompanied with explanations taken from the writings of the Fathers, or of approved Catholic commentators. There is no need of further proof that it is strictly forbidden to read, without special permission, the so-called Bibles in the different mother tongues, composed by different sectarians. These Bibles cannot be considered Holy Scripture any longer, since heretics have substantially changed the original meaning of the inspired Books, in matters regarding faith and morals, or concerning important facts of Bible history. These corruptions have been made by adding, or substituting in the originals or in their versions, words not to be found in the original Hebrew, or Greek, or in their approved Latin translation. The original meaning of the inspired writings has also been vitiated by false translations and erroneous interpretations, so that these bibles do not agree any longer with the original writings inspired by God and of which He is the Author. This fact sufficiently warns Catholics against the thousands of bibles in the vernacular or mother tongues, which are distributed gratis and in great profusion all over the world.

We conclude the subject on the reading of the Holy Scriptures with a remark we borrow from the excellent work **The Faith of our Fathers**: "If partial restrictions began to be placed on the circulation of the Bible in England in the fifteenth century, these restrictions were occasioned by the conduct of Wycliffe and his followers, who not only issued a new translation, on which they engrafted their novelties of doctrine, but also sought to explain the sacred text in a sense foreign to the received interpretation of tradition." (Ch. VIII, The Church and the Bible).

TRADITION

We are concerned here only about the Christian Tradition which is the delivery from father to son, i. e., from one bishop to his successor, of the doctrine taught by the Saviour; or, by Christian Tradition we understand the doctrine itself of Christ, which the Saviour handed down to us through the Apostles and their successors, the bishops of the Catholic Church. It is in this latter sense the Apostle used the word, when, writing to the Thessalonians, he said: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast; and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our Epistles." (2 Thess. ii. 14). By Apostolic traditions or tradition in a more or less restricted sense, we mean the whole Christian doctrine taught uninterruptedly in the

Church from the time of the Apostles to our day, exclusive of the truths transmitted to us through the inspired volumes of the New Tetament. It is in this latter sense that the word tradition is most frequently used by the Fathers of the Church and the Christian writers of our day.

The common and usual way in which Christ wished to disseminate His heavenly doctrine is by oral teaching: "Going, teach ye all nations," He said, and the Apostles so understood Him and acted accordingly. It is the only way suited to all classes of people, the only adequate way to bring the knowledge of Christianity and of peace upon earth to all men of good will.

The Bible is not a complete and perfect rule of faith.

(a) To be an adequate rule of faith the Book of Books ought to be within the reach of all, but the Bible was in the hands of but a few during many centuries, or until the invention of printing; and even for more than a hundred years after Christ, copies or apographs of the New Testament were not even in the possession of all the churches.

(b) A book, to be a perfect and complete rule of faith, should be easily understood, and we have seen already that the Bible in many places is obscure, and hundreds of texts are found in the Bible, on which heretics rely as proofs of the contradictory doctrines which keep them apart.

(c) A book cannot be the full and adequate rule of faith, if it does not contain the whole revelation, but from the Bible itself we learn that some sacred writers wish to inculcate only one fundamental truth, viz., the divinity of Christ Jesus (John xx. 30, 31); and St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, asked them to hold fast to the traditions, not only to those contained in his Epistle, but also to what he taught them by word of mouth. (2 Thess. ii. 14; Cf. John xxi. 25).

Tradition is a sure and adequate rule of faith.

It is admitted by all Christians who believe in the divinity of the Saviour, that He communicated to the Apostles the whole deposit of faith; therefore, as the Bible does not contain all that He taught them, we must have recourse to the Apostolic traditions or those traditions which have come down from the Apostles, from whom, as from their source, all the truths of revelation must flow. Our Saviour might have left us a code of laws containing all that He wished to reveal, but in that case a divinely constituted authority would still be necessary to interpret them. He has not done so. He might have chosen individual inspiration, but this method would subject man to fatal hallucinations, and there is no proof that He had recourse to a means so unsuitable to our perverse nature, to propa-

gate His teachings. He has actually employed, to perpetuate His doctrine and His institutions, chosen ministers to whom He promised special aid and grace, and they likewise have constituted men as their successors to continue the work they had so auspiciously begun; then those selected by the Apostles have in their turn chosen others to prosecute the work, and so on to our day. Just as the Apostles had written down, as occasion demanded, some of the truths which they learned from the mouth of the Saviour, so likewise did their successors instruct their flock by oral teachings, and sometimes in the form of epistles, or through decrees, when they had deliberated together in council on points of importance regarding doctrine, morals, or the discipline of the Church. These councils to which all the legitimate successors of the Apostles were summoned, are called Ecumenical Councils. Thus we see that tradition regards the written and unwritten truths of revelation, but the ordinary and common manner of propagating the Christian doctrine remains the same, i. e., oral teaching: "Go and teach."

Now what are the sources of tradition, in which we shall find all the revealed truths of faith and morals, handed down by the Apostles to their successors? They are to be found principally in the writings of the immediate and subsequent successors of the Apostles, such as: St. Clement of Rome, disciple of St. Peter, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Ireneus, disciple of St. Polycarp, who himself was a disciple of St. John, the great Doctors of the Greek and Latin Churches: St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Hippolytus, St. Athanasius, St. Hilary, St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nazianzen, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Ambrose, St. Epiphanius, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Prosper, St. Fulgentius, St. Gregory the Great; also the Fathers of the Church: St. Justin, St. Theophilus of Antioch, St. Athanagoras, St. Cyprian, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Theodoret, etc. Among the Fathers of the Church are also named Origen and Tertullian, because they have well deserved the title, on account of their early labors in establishing the claims of the Christian Faith, although later they fell into heresy. In another class must be placed several other Doctors or ecclesiastical writers, who erred in some particular doctrine, which the Church had not yet defined as an article of faith, and who therefore cannot be suspected of heresy.

We shall also find the Apostolic traditions in the decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, in the Liturgies (Mass Books), in the Sacramentaries or Rituals for the administration of the Sacraments, in the decrees and decisions of the Bishops of Rome, the successors of St. Peter, in the decisions of national, and provincial councils approved by the Holy See, in the decrees of general councils, which although not legitimately convened, were approved by the Holy See and thus have the authority of

Ecumenical Councils; likewise, in the Catechism in use throughout the Catholic Church and in the unanimous or quasi-unanimous teachings of Catholic theologians, etc.

As Christ promised to be with His Church until the end of time, Divine Providence watches over the Church and guards it against error. One individual member of the Church, even a great writer, may have held opinions now condemned by the whole Church, for no one in his individual capacity is infallible; but it is to be believed that the doctrine taught everywhere throughout the Catholic world is divine and comes down to us from Christ through Apostolic tradition. An article of faith, a dogmatic truth, is necessarily always true.

Furthermore, as there is question here of a fact, i. e., whether this or that doctrine was taught at a certain time, it seems that even if the consent be not absolutely unanimous among the writers of a certain period in history, still we may, generally speaking, accept the doctrine as a genuine tradition, if nearly all the holy and grave men of olden times testify to the particular tradition as being held and taught in their age. The question is now but of little consequence, at least for the faithful, for nearly all questions of importance have been settled by the authoritative decision of Holy Church.

Since the whole deposit of revealed truth was committed by Christ to His Apostles, and they in turn transmitted it entire, orally or in writing, to their successors, the bishops of the Catholic Church in union with the legitimate successors of the Prince of the Apostles, and since these successors until the end of time have also jointly received the promise: "And lo! I shall be with you until the consummation of the world," it belongs to them and to them only to proclaim, whenever they consider it opportune, that this or that doctrine belongs to Apostolic tradition. The same prerogative belongs also to the Pope alone, when he speaks "ex cathedra." (Vatican Council).

Likewise, the Church alone is authorized to determine the Canon of the Holy Scriptures, and to interpret all and every part thereof; and she alone can limit the scope of a genuine apostolic tradition or reject a supposed tradition as spurious.

In conjunction with this article on Tradition, it will be useful to read the decrees of the Ecumenical Councils given in the next Appendix, as well as the principal Creeds in use in the Catholic Church.

APPENDIX III

ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

I. The Ecumenical Council of Nice was held in 325 under Pope Sylvester. In it the heresy of Arius was condemned, and the Son of God declared consubstantial with the Father. In it was also decreed that Easter should be celebrated all over the world, not on the day of the full moon following the vernal equinox, but on the Sunday following that full moon. To it also we owe the Creed, called the Nicene Creed.

II. The First Council of Constantinople, held in 381, condemned the heresy of Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople, who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost. 150 Oriental Bishops took part in the deliberations of the Council. Although the Bishop of Rome had not convoked it, its decrees were subsequently approved by Pope St. Damasus. The Nicene Creed was also enlarged in form.

III. The Ecumenical Council of Ephesus in 431 was held with the approbation of St. Celestine, Bishop of Rome. In it Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, was condemned. He distinguished in Christ two persons, and denied to the Virgin Mary the title of Mother of God, contending that she should be called only the Mother of Christ.

IV. The Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon, held in 451 under Pope St. Leo, proscribed the error of Eutyches, who admitted only one nature in Christ.

V. The Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople was convened in 553 to settle the troubles occasioned by the "Three Chapters" or the erroneous opinions of three Nestorian Bishops. The errors contained in the "Three Chapters," as well as those of Origen, were condemned. Pope Vigilius confirmed the decrees of the Council, although it was not convened by him.

VI. The Third Ecumenical Council of Constantinople was convened by Pope St. Agathon in 681. In it the heresy of the Monothelites, who recognized but one will in Christ, was condemned.

VII. The Second Ecumenical Council of Nice, held in 787 under Pope Adrian I, condemned the error of the Iconoclasts or Image Breakers, and defended the veneration of images according to the tradition of the Church.

VIII. The Fourth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople, held under Adrian II, in 869, deposed Photius and reinstated Ignatius in the patriarchal See of Constantinople.

IX. The Ecumenical Council of Lateran, held in the Church of St. John Lateran in Rome, was convened by Pope Calixtus II in 1123. It settled the disputes with Henry IV regarding investitures and benefices.

X. The Second Ecumenical Council of Lateran convened by Innocent II in 1139, condemned the heresies of the Petrobrusians or followers of Peter of Bruis and Arnold of Brescia, and also annulled the acts of the antipope Peter Leo.

XI. The Third Ecumenical Council of Lateran was held in 1179 under Alexander III. Many useful decrees were passed in this Council; among them a decree for the election of the Popes, specifying that a two-thirds vote of the Cardinals shall be required; also decrees against simony, against usurers, against renegades from the Faith, against tournaments dangerous to the life of participants; also decisions relative to patrimony and benefices required as titles for ordination and on the "Truce of God". Decrees were also issued against the Waldenses and Albigenses, who under different names were devastating the Church of God.

XII. The Fourth Ecumenical Council of Lateran was convoked in 1215 by Innocent III. Four Oriental Patriarchs, viz., of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria, were represented in the Council. The book of Abbot Joachim was condemned therein, and decrees were issued to extirpate the heresy of the Albigenses, and for the recovery of the Holy Land. In the same Council annual confession and Paschal Communion were prescribed for all the faithful.

XIII. The First Ecumenical Council of Lyons, under Innocent IV, in 1245, was convened to discuss the hostility of Frederick II to the Church; it likewise adopted a policy to regain the Holy Land.

XIV. The Second Council of Lyons was convoked by Gregory X in 1274 for the purpose of promoting ecclesiastical discipline, and for the reunion of the Greek with the Latin Church. In it the Greeks accepted the definition of the Church relative to the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son.

XV. The Ecumenical Council of Vienne in France was convoked by Clement V in 1311. The Order of Templars was abolished and various heresies were condemned, and among them the fanatical Beghards. A new expedition to recover the Holy Land was also decreed.

XVI. The Ecumenical Council of Constance was convoked in 1414. The Western Schism was ended therein; Martin V was elected Supreme Pontiff and the decrees against the errors of John Huss and Jerome of Prague were confirmed by his authority.

XVII. The Ecumenical Council of Florence. This Council was several times transferred from one city to another for various causes and was concluded only in 1439 under Eugenius IV. This Council is principally famous because of its decrees for the reunion of the Greek with the Latin Church.

XVIII. The Fifth Ecumenical Council of the Lateran began in 1512 under Julius II. Some measures of discipline and reform were adopted, but they were received with indifference by the people: they came too late. The difficulties with the king of France relating to investures and benefices were settled by the abrogation of the Pragmatic Sanction and by substituting therefore a concordat between Francis I and Leo X, successor to Julius II.

XIX. The Ecumenical Council of Trent began in 1545 and concluded its labor in 1563. It was convened to condemn the errors of the so-called reformers of the sixteenth century. No other Council has defined so many doctrines of faith nor enacted such salutary laws and regulations regarding discipline and reform. Our catechisms are principally based on the doctrines laid down in that famous Council.

XX. The Vatican Council was convoked by Pius IX on December 8th, 1869; it was prorogued until a more seasonable time on October 20th, 1870, after the entry of the Piedmontese troops into Rome. The first dogmatic Constitution of the Church of Christ was adopted therein. It consists of an introduction and four chapters: viz., I. On the Institution of the Apostolic Primacy in Blessed Peter. II. On the Perpetuity of the Primacy of Blessed Peter. III. On the Power and Nature of the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff. IV. On the Infallible Teaching of the Roman Pontiff. The decrees and canons contained in the Constitution having been read, in the presence of Pope Pius IX, were approved and promulgated by him in the fourth public session on May 18, 1870. The principal dogma, the Infallibility of the Pope, when speaking "ex cathedra," in matters of faith and morals, independently of the consent of the Church, received in due course of time the assent of all the bishops of the world.

APPENDIX IV

INDULGENCES

Stations of the Cross. The Indulgences attached to the Stations of the Cross are the same as those gained by a personal visit to the stations of the Way of the Cross in Jerusalem. They are applicable to the souls in Purgatory.

Let us note the following: (a) that the one who makes the Stations, as the practice is commonly called, should have, from the beginning or at least before terminating it, the intention to gain all the indulgences attached to this pious exercise.

(b) Although we cannot assert as a certainty that the plenary indulgence of the Stations can be gained more than once a day, if we apply it to ourselves, there seems to be

nothing to prevent us from offering all the indulgences for the souls in Purgatory as a suffrage for their relief, and, therefore, it is commendable to repeat the pious devotion of the Stations several times a day.

Partial indulgences can be gained as often as the pious work is performed to which they are attached.

(c) To gain the extraordinary indulgences attached to the Stations of the Cross, there are several requisites besides those prescribed for indulgences in general:

1. The erection of the Stations must be done canonically, i. e., they must be erected by a local superior of the Franciscans, or by one delegated by him, and permission must be given by the Ordinary in every single case in writing, unless the place where the stations are to be erected, be exempted from the bishop's jurisdiction. The consent of the parish priest is likewise required, and if the place for the Stations is a hospital, college, monastery or other pious institution, the permission of the superior of such place is likewise necessary, and in both cases in writing, before the erection of the Stations takes place; unless the place be exempt from the jurisdiction of the parish priest, as in the case of chaplains regularly appointed by the Ordinary. Parish priests do not need the written consent of the Ordinary when the Stations are erected by the proper Franciscan priest, but they should make a record of the canonical erection in the book of Baptisms, although this requisite does not effect its validity.

2. The crosses, fourteen in number, placed with an interval between each two, must be of wood plainly visible, but images of the Saviour although useful are not essential.

3. The crosses must be blessed by the one who has the faculty to erect the Stations.

4. If the Stations are made privately, the person must, to gain the indulgences, move from one Station to another, but when done publicly, it is sufficient that the faithful turn toward the Stations, and each assistant, unless excused for a valid reason, should kneel and stand with the priest.

5. In both public and private devotions of the Stations of the Cross, it is required that at each Station a short meditation on the Passion corresponding to each particular Station be made, if the person be capable of it; otherwise, any meditation on Christ's sufferings suffices. The faithful assisting at the public devotion comply with this requisite, if they listen attentively to the reading and answering the prayers.

We should here note: (a) That the Stations once blessed and placed, cannot be removed to any other room or church, there to be hung up, without losing the indulgences; but they may be removed temporarily when necessary, e. g., to dust them or to clean the walls of the church; neither does a slight

change in the position affect the indulgences. Notwithstanding, the faithful cannot gain the indulgences attached to the Stations, if the crosses are removed even temporarily.

(b) The crosses may be partially and gradually renewed, when old and unsighty, provided the renewal affects only one-third or considerably less than one-half of the Stations at a time.

(c) As images and statues are not essential, they may all be removed without loss of the indulgences.

Scapulars

Scapulars which are habits of religious orders in a diminutive form, must be of the color prescribed and of woolen cloth; but images on cloth of silk or other material may be attached on one side of the woolen cloth. The colors for the scapulars are as follows: of Mount Carmel it is brown; of the Blessed Trinity, white with a red or blue cross; of the Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin, black; of the Immaculate Conception, blue; and of the Passion, red for both pieces of cloth and the strings. There are other scapulars, but they are seldom used in this country; therefore we omit mention of them.

The material and form of the scapulars must be two pieces of cloth, but quadrangular, i. e., square or rectangular, connected by braid. As to the mode of wearing them, one small piece of cloth must hang from the shoulders on the back and one in front; but it is not necessary that the scapular should touch the body. As to the quadruple and quintuple scapulars, two strings are sufficient for the four or five scapulars, if they are superposed and attached to one another.

When anyone has been invested with the scapular by a priest having the proper faculties, new scapulars to replace the old ones need not be blessed, and even if anyone has received the scapular of the B. V. M. and of Mt. Carmel, and thereafter has simply neglected to wear them without any intention of abandoning their use, he need not be inscribed again when he resumes the practice of wearing them.

It is to be remarked that priests who have the faculty to receive members into the Confraternity of the Blessed Trinity, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of Mount Carmel and of the Seven Dolors, which is done by blessing the scapulars and by the investiture, must send the names of those admitted to the nearest or most convenient Confraternity of the respective Order, for otherwise the indulgences granted to those confraternities could not be gained and the suffrages for their souls, which take place in those communities after the death of a member, would be lost; unless the priest have a special indult from the Holy See and dispense with that requisite. This is not necessary for

the blue scapular of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, nor for the scapular of the Passion of our Lord, for the members receiving these scapulars do not constitute a confraternity.

Indulgences. Besides the plenary and partial indulgences attached to the scapulars, granted to members who regularly wear them, there are extraordinary privileges: viz., 1st. to that of Mount Carmel is attached the privilege of preservation from eternal perdition and the Sabbatine privilege or the privilege of being delivered from Purgatory on the first Saturday after the death of the member; but to gain the last privilege a part of the Office of the Blessed Virgin is to be recited daily, or abstinence from meat on Wednesdays and Saturdays is enjoined in case a member cannot recite the Office, or if he be already otherwise bound to recite it., For just causes a dispensation may be granted. 2nd. To that of the Blue Scapular of the Immaculate Conception, the members who recite daily six Our Fathers and Haily Marys with the doxology (Glory be, etc.) in honor of the Blessed Trinity and of the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, and pray for the extirpation of heresies, the exaltation of our Holy Mother the Church and for peace and concord among Christian princes, gain each time all the Indulgences of the seven Basilicas: viz., the four of Rome and those of the Portiuncula, Jerusalem and St. John Compostella.

Members of sodalities are warned that as on certain days they could gain several plenary indulgences, by reciting the prayers more than once, they should apply all their indulgences except one daily plenary indulgence to the faithful departed.

Crowns and Rosaries

Beads, crowns and rosaries may be made of any material which is not fragile, even of crystal or glass, provided the glass or crystal be solid and not brittle or hollow.

For the blessing of rosaries and crowns, the Priest having the faculty must follow the rite laid down for each, but the simple blessing by making a cross over them is sufficient for all common or apostolic indulgences, even for the rosaries of St. Brigid and for the crowns of the Seven Joys of Mary; but the rosary of St. Dominic, the crowns of the Servants of Mary must be blessed according to a separate and special formula.

The general faculty to bless rosaries and crowns does not include the faculty to apply to them the indulgences of St. Brigid, of the Crosiers, of the Crown of Our Lord, of the Camaldonians and of others to which special indulgences are attached. It is to be noted that rosaries or crowns once blessed cannot be sold, but it is allowed to purchase a number of them and to have them blessed with the view of distributing them among friends.

The Pope alone can attach several indulgences to the same rosary and can also subdelegate the power, but the prayers enjoined must be repeated for each indulgence or one may in such case choose anyone of the indulgences by reciting one rosary.

To gain the indulgences attached to rosaries or crowns, it is not necessary to have an explicit intention to gain them, but an implicit and virtual intention is required; therefore it is advisable to make an intention to gain the indulgences in the beginning of the recitation of the prayers. It is also to be recommended that all the faithful should form every morning the intention of gaining all the indulgences attached to their devotions and good works of the whole day.

The Scapular Medal

We understand by scapular medal a medal taking the place of the regular scapular. It removes the obligation of wearing the scapular in the form explained, and instead it is to be worn on one's person, either sewn or attached to the clothes or hung on a string carried around the neck or kept in a pocket or pocketbook, etc. The blessing of the scapular and the reception of it, as well as the recording of the member's names in a register is necessary as heretofore, and the only difference is that the scapular, after one has been invested with it, may be laid aside and the medal be worn instead.

The Third Orders

The Third Orders are Religious Sodalities, whose members live in the world, and which even married people are allowed to join. Celibacy is not enjoined, but chastity is. As we have remarked in the body of the Catechism when speaking on the virtue of Chastity, there is the chastity of single people, the chastity of married people and the chastity of virgins or the state of virginity, freely determined upon and confirmed by a vow.

As the Third Order of St. Francis has been especially recommended by Leo XIII, a few points on the subject seem appropriate. To belong to the Order and gain the indulgences and other spiritual benefits from its membership, there are three requisites: (a) that the person be admitted into it by a priest having such faculties. Any priest belonging to the Order can receive applicants to membership, provided there be no monastery or house of the Franciscan Friars in the locality; (b) that the members be invested with the scapular of the Order and wear it continually, as well as the Cord of St. Francis: a small brown scapular is now sufficient. (c) That a member, if not already bound to say the Office, recite daily the Little

Office of the Blessed Virgin, or in case he cannot do so, he must recite daily twelve times the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the doxology; (d) That he fast on the eve of the Feasts of the Immaculate Conception and of St. Francis.

Besides the partial and plenary indulgences to be gained on certain days in the usual manner, the following are some of the principal advantages to be gained by the members of the Third Order:

1. For Priests. Priests of the Third Order enjoy the benefits of the Privileged Altar three times a week, and whenever they offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for a deceased member, they may apply to such souls a plenary indulgence in the form of a suffrage.

2. For all Tertiaries. (a) Those who have duly confessed their sins and approached the Holy Table, can gain twice a year the general absolution or blessing given in the name of the Holy Father, and to this blessing is attached a plenary indulgence, provided the tertiaries pray a while for his intention. (b) Under the same conditions they may receive the same absolution and blessing on several specified days, and it is further conceded that, if they are legitimately prevented from going to church on the specified days, they may gain the same favor on a day of obligation within eight days. (c) They may even gain the indulgence of the absolution on the eve of the specified day, but in this case it must be given privately to them after the confession of their sins. This private absolution can be given by any priest who is himself a tertiary, but the public absolutions must be given by a director of a congregation of tertiaries.

As for the privileges of other confraternities and sodalities, e. g., of the League of the Apostleship of Prayer, of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, of the Children of Mary, of the Holy Name, etc., the statutes of each confraternity should be consulted.

Ejaculatory Prayers

Many short ejaculatory prayers are indulgenced and they should be learned by heart. We can give only a few that can be gained each time, except as noted: "My God and my All" (50 days); the sign of the Cross (50 days) and with holy water (100 days); "O my Jesus, mercy" (100); "Sweet Heart of Jesus, make me love Thee more and more every day" (300); "Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my love" (300 once a day); "Sweet Heart of Mary be my salvation" (300 and plenary indulgence once a month, if said daily during a visit to a church); "Sweet Hearts of Jesus and Mary be my refuge" (300); "Jesus, Mary and Joseph" (7 years and 7 quarantines); "My Lord and my God" (7 years and 7 quarantines each time during the elevation of

the Host and the Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament); the following salutation between Catholics when they meet, deserves a warm commendation: Praised be Jesus Christ. Answer: Forevermore or Amen. (50 for each person, and a plenary indulgence at the moment of death for those who have been accustomed thus to salute each other, if they pronounce the name of Jesus with the lips or if unable to do so, from the heart.)

Spiritual Benefits derived from Indulgences

1. There can be no doubt among well-informed Catholics about the great advantage which their souls derive from Plenary Indulgences, for a Plenary Indulgence remits all the temporal punishment due to mortal and venial sin, of which the guilt has been forgiven. Notwithstanding, we are forced to admit that an absolutely full remission of all the punishment, which we have deserved through innumerable transgressions against God's laws, is not easily obtainable; for one unforgiven venial sin is an obstacle to it. This happens when one has an affection for idle thoughts, or for unduly intimate and tender conversations, or for any act or habit that constitutes a slight offense. Venial sins are seldom confessed, and are not always sincerely deplored; but even then, a plenary indulgence will wipe out the debt contracted through all other forgiven sins. In order that we may not be deprived of all the salutary effects of a full, complete and absolutely plenary indulgence, we shall do well to make frequently acts of perfect contrition, and to include in our sincere sorrow all our sins, known or unknown, mortal as well as venial. Since a perfect contrition forgives mortal sins, if recourse to the Sacrament of Penance can not be had, the same contrition will remove from our souls the guilt and stain caused by venial sin, because we are not bound to confess them and the plenary indulgence will do the rest.

2. To our mind plenary indulgences present but few diffculties that require explanation, but the case is different with partial indulgences, which are given as indulgences of days, of quarantines or quadragenes (lents of forty days), or of years. For a clear understanding of the question, we must go back to the first centuries of the Church, when penitents in the tribunal of Penance and those found guilty in ecclesiastical trials received days and years of penance for some enormous sins of which they had been guilty. These penances were imposed according to rules laid down in the Penitential Canons of the early Church. Thus we have the Canons of St. Peter of Alexandria, of St. Gregory the Wonder-worker, of St. Basil, of St. Gregory of Nyssa, etc., by which penances of days, quadragenes and years, yea, for the sinner's whole life, were imposed. In accordance with the Penitential Canons, the time of enjoined

penances was often shortened, because of the fervor of the penitent and of the sincere repentance of which he gave proof. During the persecutions of the second and third centuries remittance of the canonical penances were also obtained through the intercession of the confessors of the faith, who chose an ignominious death rather than to abandon their Christian belief and practices. This was ordinarily done in the form of a petition in which the martyr offered so much of the merit of his heroic death as would satisfy for all or a part of the temporal punishment imposed upon the suppliant penitent. The release from a part or from the whole of all canonical punishment was first called a relaxation, and later on an indulgence: for indulgent fathers or mothers, through love of their offspring, often remit the punishment of their children, and our merciful God is inclined by indulgence to forgive the penitent sinner. By little and little, good works and charities were substituted for the severe canonical punishments of the early Church, so that in the eleventh century the Church imposed public penances only for abominable crimes known publicly, and secret penances for secret offenses. Abuses nevertheless crept in, and were of frequent occurrence when lay questors or collectors of pious alms were appointed to gather them, and the Church was then forced to command the bishops to publish all indulgences in order that the poorest as well as the rich could equally avail themselves of the benefit or indulgences.

To-day more than ever, people love comfort and ease, and shrink from all kinds of sacrifices, such as fasts, macerations of the body, hair-shirts and all other mortifications, and notwithstanding they are not more God-fearing, nor freer from sin, nor more pious, charitable and devoted to God's service. How then can we hope to satisfy for the temporal punishments due to our mortal and venial sins, even if we may trust in God's mercy, that our mortal sins have been forgiven as to the eternal punishment due to them? The Church offers numerous indulgences both plenary and partial to remit all or a part of the temporal punishment due to our sins, and if we shrink from bodily pains, the Church aims to make us more spiritual although not less perfect, by exciting in our hearts an ardent love of God, devotedness in his service and perfect conformity to His holy will. For the pious works, exercises, prayers and practices, to which rich indulgences are attached, tend to render Christians more fervent and devoted in their filial piety towards their infinitely bountiful God, as well as more holy and perfect; for, if in this world we wish to be free from great afflictions and tribulations, pains and mortifications—and God so disposes it—we are bound to make up for the defects of our past by the sanctity of our lives.

Although indulgences, while paying our debts to the Sovereign Judge, do not of themselves forgive venial sin, the pious works to which they are attached may increase habitual grace in the soul, and this increase necessarily diminishes the guilt of venial sin. Neither do indulgences overcome the evil inclinations of our vitiated nature, the passions of the soul, and the concupiscence of the flesh; therefore the most pious Christian may, like St. Paul, he obliged to chastise his body and bring it under subjection, in order to preserve himself from eternal ruin. This warning concerns especially penitents whom their confessor has advised to have recourse to fasts or other mortifications, as the only sure means to overcome the temptations by which they are assailed.

With regard to partial indulgences, someone might doubt their usefulness; because we are not told what part of our indebtedness to God is paid by indulgences of days and years. This objection might be of some weight, if there were question of debts between people in this world; but with our all-knowing Judge the case is different. We must admit that indulgences would be more easily understood and would need but little explanation, if the Church specified that an indulgence remits one-half, one-third, or one-fourth of the punishment due to our sins; but by adopting such a discipline, she would discriminate in favor of the greatest debtor, for he that is most indebted to God would be more benefited than the fervent Christian who has little to satisfy for; and the saint who is free from all indebtedness, would reap no benefit whatever from an indulgence as such.

Since we are not taught what temporal punishments are due to our forgiven mortal and venial sins, God has also wisely kept from us the credit due us for each of our good works; and it is most probable that no two good works of ours deserve the same merit, because of the different sentiments and dispositions that accompany them. Furthermore, "Man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred" (Eccle. ix. 1), and, therefore, St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit in perfecting (our) sanctification." (2 Cor. vii. 1). And the same admonition we receive from St. Peter, in the following warning: "Converse in fear during your sojourning here." (1 Peter i. 17). Fear of God, and hope in His goodness and mercy, should be wisely blended, for fear without hope leads to despair, and hope without fear leads to presumption, and presumption and despair are both sins against the Holy Ghost.

Someone may insist that partial indulgences are vague, because they are given in lieu of canonical penances in use in the Church from the second to the eleventh century, and because the Penitential Canons or rules to be followed in enjoining

penances by confessors in the Sacrament of Penance or by judges in ecclesiastical trials, were not always the same in different dioceses, or in the same diocese at different times: hence we are at a loss to determine even approximately what we gain by an indulgence of days, quadragenes (lents of forty days) or years. To the foregoing objection we answer that with good reason we may assume that the Holy Father in granting partial indulgences in lieu of canonical penances, could not have in mind public penances for secret sins, which have been abolished centuries ago and of which no vestige remained at the end of the eleventh century. Besides, public penances for sins disclosed in the confessional are strictly forbidden, and as to those imposed on public sinners, although still resorted to for heinous and abominable crimes in the eleventh century, their practice was abandoned in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. By examining carefully the Penitential Canons, we find one penance that runs through all of them and nevertheless it is not necessarily a public penance. At the same time it is considered as the most severe of all penances, and, therefore, also the most meritorious; and that is fasting on bread and water, or where bread was not in use. fasting on dried fruit and water. Such were also the fasts of the early Church in Lent and they are still observed in many monasteries. If anyone should ask us by what right we assume that the Holy Father has in mind the most severe penance in lieu of which partial indulgences are offered, we answer: Favores ampliandi, onera retringenda (Favors should be enlarged and burdens restricted). An indulgence is a great favor from our merciful God, and if His Vicegerent nowise determines what penance he intended to be superseded by a partial indulgence, we have a right to point to the most meritorious and the least objectionable under all other respects, which we find among the penitential canons. Therefore, we gladly subscribe to the teachings of St. Alph. Ligorio, Scavini, etc., when they say without the slightest hesitation, and without explanation, that by an indulgence of 50 or more days, of quadragenes, of one to seven years, the same remittance of the temporal punishment due to our forgiven sins, is gained as was formerly obtained by fasting on bread and water for the same number of days, lents or years in accordance with the ancient Penitential Canons; or in order to make St. Ligorio's teaching clearer still, we may safely hold the following: If the Penitential Canons were still observed and imposed upon penitents, an indulgence of days and years would satisfy as much for the temporal punishments due to our sins, as if we fasted the same number of days and years on bread and water in a spirit of penance, hoping thereby to pay a part of the debt due to God on account of our sins. (See St. Alph. Ligorio L. 6. Tr. 4, No. 535).

For the consolation of those who may not have understood until now the nature of indulgences and the spiritual advantages derived from them, let me present the following explanation: If a rich man makes you a gift of a bag of precious stones, the gift is not less valuable because you do not know at the time the value of each precious stone contained in the bag, which you accepted most gratefully; likewise an indulgence loses nothing o fits spiritual benefit because we do not know all the effects it produces in our soul. In this world we cannot prize at its worth the value of a single indulgence. The beauty of earth cannot be compared with the beauty of heaven, nor can all the riches of the world buy a seat among the saints or angels of Paradise. Punishments still due to our sins, even after their guilt and stain are washed away, keep us out of heaven, and indulgences remit those punishments, and, therefore, remove the last barrier to our entrance into the abode of eternal bliss.

The value of indulgences is better understood when we consider the unhappy state of a man that dies burdened with the accumulated debts contracted by numberless venial and mortal sins, even if the guilt of all sins be forgiven. In Purgatory souls suffer, and continue to suffer until they have paid the last farthing of their debt, unless they are helped by the prayers of the faithful on earth, by the holy Sacrifice of the Mass or by indulgences applicable to them as suffrages for their relief before our merciful God. Revelation does not teach us the duration nor the nature of the punishment inflicted on such as die in the state of grace and who are burdened with the guilt of venial sin and with the satisfaction still due to their venial and mortal sins, the guilt of which may have been forgiven whilst they still lived in the flesh. Our ignorance of their condition is indeed extremely painful to the living friends and relatives of the departed, especially so because all of us are rightfully apprehensive of our own future condition after death.

From the nature and salutary effects of indulgences already explained, we rightly conclude that Catholics in general are blind to their spiritual interests, when, either through neglect of or indifference to things divine, they make light of that inexhaustible treasury, made up of the infinite merits of the Redeemer, and of the superabundant merits of the saints, which Christ placed at the disposal of St. Peter and his successors when He said: "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shalt be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xvi. 19). Even well-disposed Catholics lose many opportunities of drawing from the sacred treasury what will pay their own debts due to forgiven sins and the

debts of those dear to them, because they neglect to make the necessary intention of gaining the indulgences offered them in such abundance, for indulgences are available only to those who accept them. This intention should be renewed at least every morning, and better still before or at the time one performs an act or utters a prayer to which an indulgence is attached.

One more practical question, the one regarding the choice we should make among the indulgences proclaimed at different times, remains to be considered. Generally speaking, we should choose among all the good works, devotions and prayers enriched by indulgence, those to which the greatest indulgences are attached; for such works are likewise those that tend most to our spiritual advantage by increasing in us charity, which is the greatest of all virtues and which perfects them all. Besides, when the Church substitutes indulgences for canonical penances, she aims to make us less material and more spiritual, and thus, through filial love of God, more ready to accomplish in all things our heavenly Father's good pleasure. The service of God through fear is the beginning of wisdom, but the same service performed through filial love, is the perfection of every sincere Christian. The noblest of ends, perfect charity, here justifies the means by which the Head of the Church substitutes indulgences for canonical punishments. Nevertheless we should bear in mind that we are not dispensed entirely from the obligation of combating the passions of the soul and the concupiscence of the flesh. How many Christians are there not—and we must mention especially penitents upon whom their confessor has imposed mortifications as their only safeguard against relapse into mortal sin—who like St. Paul feel in their members a law or inclination to evil so overwhelmingly powerful and insistent that macerations of the flesh alone can bring them victory? "I chastise my body," says the great Apostle, "and bring it under subjection, lest, having preached to others, I myself become a reprobate." (1 Cor. ix. 27). Nevertheless, the common and usual means by which Christians overcome the enemies of their salvation, the world, the flesh and the devil, is the supernatural strength they acquire through the Sacraments and certain practices and devotions, which bring God Himself to their aid, and make Him fight at their side. These exercises and practices are again the very ones to which the greatest indulgences are attached. Besides frequent confession which takes away the guilt of man's sins and thereby removes the greatest obstacle to the remission of the temporal punishment due to them, the principal are: The rich indulgences attached to ejaculatory prayers ought to spur us on to their constant use; frequent Holy Communion, the indispensible food of the soul, rich in plenary indulgences as

well as in partial indulgences, through the indulgenced prayers said before and after; devotion to the Blessed Virgin by reciting the Holy Rosary on blest beads, highly indulgenced; the exercise of the Way of the Cross, so powerful a means to excite in our hearts a great horror of sin, tender love for the suffering Saviour and His sorrowful Mother, and enriched by plenary and many partial indulgences; numerous confraternities and sodalities, whose end is most pious and salutary, and whose members enjoy many privileges and innumerable indulgences, etc.

We gather from all we have learned regarding indulgences, the great admiration we should have for the wisdom of the Church in substituting for canonical penances works of supererogation calculated to enkindle in our hearts an ardent love of God, and in proposing to our serious consideration the means by which we may flee the dangers of a wicked world and overcome all the enemies of our salvation. Besides, the indulgences attached to the devotions, pious works and associations, which she recommends with such earnestness, will more than repay for the losses we may have sustained by abandonin the canonical penances. The good results of this change of discipline in the Church, we must attribute to the benignity of our heavenly Father, Who no longer looks upon us as servants and slaves, but as His well-beloved children, brethren and co-heirs of His Son Jesus.

APPENDIX V

SOCIALISM

Socialism is not easily defined; it is an ism, taken in an objectionable sense, that is, a wild and unrealizable theory, having for end the material welfare of society, by establishing absolute democracies which shall supersede the now existing governments throughout the world. But the means proposed to secure that end have not been sufficiently determined and reduced to a system acceptable to all the adherents of socialism.

At first, socialism had for object a social reform, tending to a more equal distribution of the advantages and burdens resulting from social life; but this is now the dream of advanced sociologists, who predict that this happy result will be attained when sociology will be reduced to a science.

Socialism, in the last half of the last century, attacked property and capital, as a monopoly detrimental to society at large; and not only did it swing over to communistic views, but it adopted pure radicalism, with a view to destroying, not only all social and political institutions, but the very foundation of society, family life, morality and religion. We do not mean to include in our strictures every member who belongs to

a socialistic organization, but only the majority, the leaders of socialistic thought and the most influential among its members. Our knowledge of what constitutes socialism must be sought in socialistic publications and in the public utterances of those who direct the affairs of the society; but many who pride themselves on the name of socialist and have been affiliated as members to socialistic unions, have been lured into them by false representations regarding the nature and tendency of socialism.

If socialism had solely in view the betterment of the laboring classes, of the mechanic, the toiler of the soil and of the common laborer, to be obtained by just and equitable means, we should all co-operate to the extent of our power; but the errors taught by the socialists, and the means employed by them, are so subversive of order, morality and religion, that the Church, always careful of the spiritual, as well as of the temporal welfare of all classes of society, and especially of the proletariat or working class, condemns the pretended reforms of the socialists, and especially the means adopted to attain their end, as contrary to natural law and the positive law of God, as destructive of order and religion, and as detrimental to human society, to the family and the laborer.

Socialism has been condemned by the three last Popes: Pius IX, Leo XIII, and Pius X. Hence socialists are under the ban of the Church, like all members of secret societies, and remain so until they withdraw from the society; and let it be noted here, that Catholics who have joined the socialists cannot be absolved from the excommunication by withdrawing secretly, but it is required that they cause their names to be stricken from the roll of membership, in order to repair, as far as they can, the evil effect of the scandal they have given.

The aim of socialism is a chimera.

The aim of socialists is equality among all men; and this aim is, to say the least, chimerical, as absolute equality is impossible. We are not born equal, either mentally or physically; we have not the same inclinations, even if the opportunities were alike for all. Some are by nature industrious and frugal, whilst others by inclination or habit are indolent and improvident, if not vicious.

No human power can equalize the physical and moral diversities encountered among men. The nearest possible equality that can exist in this world, is found in religious communities of men and women in cloisters and convents; but there poverty is voluntary, and perfect equality is there possible only, because Christian humility induces every individual member to seek the most humble tasks, and no one is bound to provide for the future welfare of his posterity. Can we expect that fathers and mothers will so divest themselves of the nat-

ural love of their offspring, that they will freely renounce their worldly goods and the fruit of their labor, in favor of the State and fail to provide for their children's welfare? If there are men and women, who have freely abandoned home and those dear to them, given up all they possess, and labored solely for the welfare of their neighbor and of the religious community they have joined, such conduct is heroic and is possible only to those, who, for religious motives, despise what this world so earnestly and persistently covets, in expectation of an eternal reward in the next world.

Who will do the drudgery and toilsome work in the socialistic state? Who will till the soil? If there is no more hope of an increased individual prosperity, will not all the farmers aspire to the more social life in cities and centers of amusement? Is it not the hope of a better condition that spurs men on to greater energy? Take away all hope of excelling others, and you counteract a sound emulation, and paralyse the greatest incentive to individual effort. Force equality among all men, irrespective of their aptitude, industry and frugality, and you turn back the wheels of progress. It is selfishnes, egotism and the prospect of a better future, that make men exert themselves. New inventions have cost much labor and tedious experiments, and individual gain alone sped the inventor to his goal.

Let us now consider the means which socialists propose to employ to obtain their forlorn hope of universal equality, or to better the laborer's condition: The study will justify the severe condemnation and anathemas of the Church, as well as the contempt of the best classes of society for the socialism of our day.

I. Socialism avowedly recognizes no religion, for its end is purely materialistic. The most moderate among socialists hold that religion concerns only the individual, and they adroitly dismiss any religious topic, such as Christian education in the new Socialistic State, for fear of shocking the religious sensibility of some of the members, notably the Catholics; but it is well to know that, in most socialistic publications, the virus of diabolic hatred against the teachings and practices of the Church, is but thinly varnished and easily detected. The principles and methods of socialism are diametrically opposed to Catholic thought and doctrine; and for Catholics to associate intimately and secretly with atheists, materialists and agnostics, without speaking of many socialists who despise and hate the Catholic religion, is, to say the least, dangerous to their faith. At most, it may be tolerated that Catholics band together with their fellow-laborers of another religion or no religion at all, to remove some specific burden or to attain some just end in view, which they could not accomplish alone; but it may

never be tolerated that Catholics become members of a society in which their religion is ignored, and which has for end the destruction of civil society, morality and order. The fundamental and radical changes in society at large, proposed by the socialists, cannot be otherwise than detrimental to established order, and should not be attempted without the approbation of the Church, which is, after all, the court of last resort to determine the respective rights and correlative duties of rulers and of their subjects.

Even if socialists only ignore the Christian religion without opposing it, where will they learn the wisdom to frame just laws and to rule wisely? Can men be wise without the wisdom of God? Hear Wisdom speak by the mouth of Solomon: "Counsel and equity is mine, prudence is mine, strength is mine. By me kings reign and lawgivers decree just things. By me princes rule and the mighty decree justice" (Prov. viii. 14-16).

The Church is God's mouthpiece and representative, and she alone will endure to teach forever to all nations God's wisdom, so indispensable to frame just laws and to assure their observance by salutary sanctions. Socialism denies her prerogatives, derides her institutions, ridicules her observances, and vomits its bile against the Pope, bishops and priests, and all hose who dare publicly assail the principles of socialism. Socialists in general are the avowed enemies of the Christian name, and for Catholics to join forces with communism, socialism and radicalism, is to enter into league with the infernal dragon for the destruction of the family, social life, religion and order.

II. Where there is no religion there cannot be any morality, for morality is based on religious truths, made known to us, either in a natural manner, that is, through sound reason and an upright conscience, or in a supernatural manner, through a positive revelation from God. Here again the Church is the supreme tribunal to decide the justice of the principles underlying the constitution of any government, and if the Church does not always make her voice heard, it is because nearly all the governments of the civilized nations of the world have adopted constitutions and laws conformable to Christian ethics. But when societies like socialism have views antagonistic to the principles of natural and supernatural revelation, the Church is not slow to point out the falsity of their principles and the injustice of their aim, and to command her members to keep aloof from them.

The works of men are inevitably imperfect, even when based upon sound and upright principles, and as, moreover, conditions and circumstances change, new laws and amendments to old laws are constantly resorted to in the legislatures of the world; but no one, except radical socialists, communists

or nihilists, considers that the destruction of the whole political fabric is imperative to suit a few blatant demagogues, who have nothing to lose but all to gain in the upheaval.

III. Among the immoral principles of socialism, we must mention especially those that are destructive of the sacred family tie. According to the most influential socialists, there is no sacred tie that binds husband to wife, and conversely; but free intercourse between man and woman must take the place of what they claim to be vicious marriage obligations. Again, as soon as children of a family can be utilized by the State, they must be taken from their fathers and mothers to be educated by it, and from that moment they are free from parental authority. Here we have free-love enacted by law, and beneficial beyond all expectation, because it will dispense with the necessity of birth-control: there will be no births to control. We see from what has been said how socialism would undermine the sacredness of the conjugal union, parental authority and the love of offspring, which animates so many fathers and mothers to great deeds of self-sacrifice.

IV. We come now to socialistic morality with regard to property, and the means socialists propose to employ to improve the conditions of the proletariat or working class.

Socialism condemns private property, and therefore takes a stand against the natural law and Divine revelation as evinced by Holy Scripture, which teaches us to respect the property of another and forbids theft, robbery and all kinds of injustice. The earliest history of the human race tells us that the sons of Adam had their private property: Cain was a tiller of the soil, and from the fruit of his labor, he offered up a sacrifice to God. Abel owned sheep and he likewise sacrificed the firstlings of his flock. Abraham and his nephew Lot owned separately such large herds and flocks that quarrels and strifes arose between their respective shepherds and herders. To avoid all contentions they agreed to separate: Lot took his herds towards the East to the level country, now occupied by the Dead Sea, and Abraham led his animals towards the West of Palestine.

Socialism is opposed to the natural law, because God necessarily wishes to maintain order and peace among His children on earth, and if the right to private property is not safeguarded, anarchy necessarily results, as well as the degradation of mankind to the level of wild animals; for if men prey upon each other like wild beasts, there is an end to human society, says the Angelic Doctor. (II. 2, q. 66, a. 6). Therefore does Pius IX end his first encyclical, in which he anathematizes the communists, with these words: "If their doctrine be once admitted, then all rights, all goods, all property, yea, human society itself, are completely overthrown and destroyed to their

foundation." There is but little difference between communism, radicalism and socialism, as to their ultimate scope and intent: the first aims at a community of goods; radicalism at a community or equality of authority and power; and socialism contains all the errors of the communists and radicals, with this exception, that in socialism the State usurps all property and authority, and the people become the State. But between Proudhon, who held that property is theft, and the socialists of our day, who see in their system of State ownership the panacea of all human ills, there are so many intermediate systems, all contradicting one another, that it is impossible to find anything else in their beautiful promises and specious arguments, but selfishness or quixotism, that is, the lucubrations of a diseased mind, in a word, a non-realizable utopia.

V. With most socialists the end justifies the means. Their argument runs somewhat like this: the poor and underpaid laborers have the right to improve their condition of life, for their condition is intolerable; it is a crime and a moral wrong. Peaceful and just means have been employed without avail; hence, any means are justifiable to right the wrong.

We willingly concede that the condition of the proletariat, although much better than it has been in the past, is not what it should be, and that wage earners have a perfect right to seek redress by just and equitable means; but the second proposition of the argument cannot be granted. Laborers have not employed the most effective weapons to attain their end.

The future success of wage earners in improving their condition lies not in noisy agitations, but in the ballot-box. It is here that unity among laborers is wanting, because there is no proper organization among them. Unions among the different branches of labor are indispensable, but a federation of unions alone can bring out the full strength of labor. Selfishness is not found among capitalists only: the best-organized and best-paid laborers seem to be totally indifferent to the condition of unskilled labor, and hence the working class as a whole suffers from the lack of co-operation and co-ordination.

Besides this defect of a system of federation that should include all branches of labor, another cause of disunion and the greatest drawback to the welfare of the proletariat, is rightly ascribed to socialism. Socialists, because of their extreme radical measures, their unsound morality and their hatred of religion, have alienated not only the most influential and best-disposed American citizens, but the larger portion of all honest and thrifty laborers with their families as well. Even if we should admit that the condition of wage-earners is intolerable, and that they have vainly tried all just and equitable means to improve it—two statements now fully disproved—still it would remain unlawful to have recourse to sinful acts to

insure success; for, no matter what the provocation may be, sinful deeds directly intended are never justifiable. Thus lying, cheating, injuring another in his reputation or in his property, depriving another unjustly of his liberty or of his rights, and, in one word, lawlessness of all kinds is never lawful. It is true that in an extreme necessity a starving man may steal sufficient food to save his life, but in such a case a reasonable owner is not supposed to resent it. Sound ethics teaches that the slightest evil may not be done to obtain the greatest good. All deliberate and wilful actions of men, are, as to their morality, either good, bad or indifferent, but an evil intention in matters of importance vitiates the best deeds, and an evil deed remains sinful, no matter how good the end may be. If the end of an evil act be also evil, then the deed is doubly sinful. Again, an indifferent act, or an act that is neither good nor bad in itself, such as to walk, to sit, to read, etc., becomes bad or good, according to the end the actor has in view. Circumstances may also determine the morality of a deed, for, although man is free to do or to omit an indifferent act, his liberty may be curtailed, because of injury that may result from it to himself or to others.

The foregoing ethical principles are admitted by all upright and well-informed people, whatever be their religious belief, with the exception of socialists and kindred agitators; and they, with ordinary common sense, cannot but foresee the dire consequences of a principle that sets aside all vested rights, on the plea that some good will result from an evil deed, which thereby becomes justifiable. But the truth is that among socialists there are many anarchists, who are plotting a general upheaval of established society by robbery and pillage, in the hope of becoming one day the absolute monarchs of the new order of things. The French Revolution with its carnage of indefensible men and women, its massacre of innocents and the bloody wars which followed in its train, is still too fresh in the minds of people allow them to be easily deceived by specious arguments or by the high-sounding words of liberty, equality and fraternity. "By their works you shall know them." He who advocates a principle destructive of good morals and order, must will it, and will execute it, if he find a sufficient number of dupes to aid him in the attempt. If socialists and their abettors should ever succeed, which God forbid, we know what to expect: our beautiful country, the land of the free and the brave, will return to the condition of a few generations back; it will be occupied by savage predatory tribes, preying upon each other like wild beasts in a jungle or a desert wilderness.

We may all shout: This shall never be! and nevertheless, there is danger. There are rumblings of discontent, and that

not far off: they are within our hearing. Where lies the cause? Where is the remedy?

The great social evil, threatening a most dangerous and widespread upheaval of society, will come from the conflict between capital and labor: the rapid strides toward material progress through the wonderful inventions of labor-saving devices during the last century, the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few, the spread of learning and education among all classes, the greed of capitalists, corporations and trusts solely bent upon gain, and the conviction among skillful and common laborers that they do not share equally with the moneyed men and wealthy proprietors, the great benefits and comforts of the general progress, and above all the denial of religious truths, as well as the corruption of morals among the masses, have brought upon the social world strife, envy and hatred between the employer and employee, between the capitalist class and the proletariat, which bode no good for the future.

Those who have passed the usual limit of three score and ten and have had occasion to watch the trend of material progress among all classes of people, cannot adopt the demagogue's view that workers have become slaves of capitalists, and that their condition has become unbearable. Wage-earners are indeed better off than those of a century ago, for they have opportunities of advancement then scarcely dreamed of; but it is also true that the proletariat has not shared equally with the moneyed interests the benefits of social progress. This much is at least generally admitted, and therefore no time need be wasted in proving it.

Singly the laborer has no redress, and his remedy lies in organzation. As capital is well organized, so likewise workmen not only have the right, but are in duty bound to organize their efforts for their common good, and for the welfare of those depending on them. But here due vigilance and prudence are required on the part of Catholics and above all of Catholic priests, who are naturally inclined towards that portion of their flock, which procures them the greatest consolation, without mentioning their sacred duty of imitating their Master in His love of the poor and downtrodden, and of alleviating, to the extent of their power, all suffering and misery among them.

In our exposition of the remedies for the social evil which threatens us, we shall follow the spirit and teachings of our great Pope Leo XIII, contained in his Encyclical "Rerum Novarum" of May 15, 1891.

As it is much easier to prevent a disease than to cure it, the rules and suggestions of the Holy Father are rather preventive of evil than remedial. He touches first on the inequality of man's condition, which is unavoidable, because we are not born equal in health, strength and capacity, and there-

fore there will always be poor amongst us. This is due also to misfortunes, sickness and accidents, which are the wages of sin, but inequality should not be looked upon as humiliating, either to the unfortunate or to those who labor with their hands. Bodily labor is honorable, and the employer should respect in the wage-earner his dignity as a man and a Christian. Neither should employers take advantage of a laborer's needs, but should pay him honest wages, and above all should not defraud him. Wealth and poverty are of little consequence, but the use made of them is what counts before God; and therefore the rich should freely share their wealth with the poor. Christianity represented by the Church is the great remedial institution to bring together master and servant, and both rich and poor should follow the teachings of the Saviour and His Apostles and the example of the early Christians.

Human means should not be neglected, and the great Pope looks to the State for preventive and remedial measures against the evils threatening society in general. The State should protect the rights of all classes, respect private property, equalize taxation, build up moral families, and foster religion and justice.

The laborer's wages, according to the Encyclical, should be just, and by this must be understood that they should be sufficient to enable any workman to keep himself and his family decently and honorably, so that by living industriously and frugal, he may save a portion of his earnings for future needs. Economy is earnestly counseled among wage-earners, to enable them to share more extensively in the acquisition of private property, and thus secure a humble home for each family in the cities, and in the country a small piece of ground they may call their own.

We now come to that part of the Encyclical, which treats of all sorts of organizations, undertaken for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the wage-earners. Under that head are comprised fraternal associations and unions, mutual aid societies, corporations, syndicates, guilds and patronages. All these, with the exception of patronages, have principally in view the temporal interests of their members. The Holy Father seems to favor especially the guilds as they existed in the Middle Ages. He probably studied carefully their organization whilst he was nuncio to the government of Belgium, where those guilds flourished extensively among all kinds of crafts and branches of labor in the smallest villages as well as in the largest cities; and the magnificent Maisons des Corporations in the larger centers, and the more humble guild-houses in the villages, are still scrupulously preserved and pointed to as the pride and glory of by-gone days of prosperity and happiness. Like the guilds, trade-unions should include the masters as well as the laborers, the capitalists and employers as well as

the employees. In all trade-unions all those who are interested in some particular branch of labor or craft should be represented, and their constitutions and by-laws should be framed with a view to obtaining the greatest efficiency among the workmen, the security of the capital employed, and the material and spiritual welfare of the employees and their families; and if differences arise between employers and their employees, arbitration should be resorted to, to settle all disputes. It is strange to say that the Rockefellers after prolonged strife with their workmen in Colorado, have been the first to adopt the suggestion of the Pope, although it would seem that the organization, including employers, bosses and laborers, has been copied after the English guilds rather than after those of Continental Europe. Trades-unions among the laborers alone often aggravate the existing evils. Employers often look upon their employees as enemies they have to fight, and conversely; and as long as the capitalists and the proletariat keep aloof from each other, disturbances will occur, if not disastrous strikes, from which, no matter who suffers defeat, reactions set in, detrimental to the business or trade, and harmful alike to employers and employees, unless a timely compromise on equitable lines have terminated the strike.

In all guilds, trades-unions and other workmen's associations, provision should be made for sickness, accidents and old age, in the shape of sick-benefits, accident policies, insurances, pensions and the like, so that every employee, mechanic or common laborer, may take an interest in the welfare of the trade and of the association to which he belongs. In many countries the State has undertaken what the different crafts have neglected to do, without annoying interference with either capital or labor. Government employees in most countries of Europe are now well protected by liberal pensions and in some cases by sick-benefits in the shape of full or half pay in sickness. The stability of the State is thereby safeguarded, and greater efficiency among its employees has been the result. If the State has done so much for its employees, why should not railroad and steamship companies, mining and industrial concerns, do likewise for their workmen? If the State among different nations pensions its employees in the military and civil service, why not pension all industrial workers, miners, mechanics and even common laborers, as is done for all wage-earners in Belgium? Workmen should be taught to be honest, sober, frugal and industrious, so as to deserve the respect of all classes of citizens; and they should feel that it is profitable for them to be so, for, having lived soberly, justly and industriously, they secure for those depending on them comfort and ease, and for themselves peace and contentment, and a happy old age through a modest pension or insurance added to their savings.

POSTSCRIPT

The author of the High School Catechism claims no originality for his work. The doctrine laid down therein is the doctrine of the Church as expounded by her most renowned Doctors and approved theologians.

In preparing this High School Catechism for publication the author examined the writings of a great many learned theologians, besides St. Thomas and St. A. Ligorio, but if this work has any merit, the largest meed of praise is due to Wilmer's Handbook of the Christian Religion, translated from the German by Rev. J. Conway, S.J., an excellent work for pupils more advanced than those of our high schools. Since the author has used said Handbook as a text-book in his former instructions to novices, not only the thoughts, but the language and the expressions have become natural and unavoidable.

THE AUTHOR.

17229